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NEWS SUMMARY

GENERAL
Lisbon rally ended by gas
A pro-government rally called by the Socialist and Popular Democratic Front in Lisbon broke up in wild order last night when gas and tear gas were used to clear the crowd. The attacks, which most observers believe to be the work of extreme left, took place in the middle of a speech by Prime Minister Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo, in the Terreiro da Paço, writes Paul Elton.

BUSINESS
BR wins role as consultant to Iran
BRITISH RAIL has won a five-year consultancy contract to advise Iran on the modernisation and electrification of its railways that could lead to big export orders for BR and other U.K. contractors. Back Page

BR wins role as consultant to Iran
EMF may soon face strong competition in the developing U.S. market for the new 3-ray technology. It has pioneered three rival manufacturers have filed the radiation safety documents required by U.S. regulations before such instruments can be marketed there. Page 6

Oil Platform Bravo in Norway's Ekofisk field has resumed production. An inspection showed its feeder pipes had not been affected by the rust damage that led to the fatal explosion on Ekofisk Alpha.

Uncertainty over structure of BIOC
OIL INDUSTRY is still uncertain about the structure to be adopted for the British National Oil Corporation, although the Bill setting up the group should receive the Royal Assent this week. It now appears possible that the appointment of a top oil industry executive as chief executive may be dropped in favour of a civil servant. Back Page

Republican shot dead in Belfast
A 19-year-old Republican, John Kelly, was shot dead by two masked gunmen in Belfast, while another member of the Official Unionist movement was critically injured by gunfire at the Newington Abbey on Saturday. The Provisional IRA in Belfast admitted responsibility for the shooting. Back Page

Edwards was meant to be - Heath
Edward Heath believes the discovery of a motorist's car near his home yesterday morning was meant for him. It was used by a motorist to beat a road block and defused just before it exploded. Back Page

Hospitals may have to close
Hospitals in the North West may be closed following a strike by junior doctors wanting better overtime pay to step militant action. Back Page

Guatemala backed
Guatemala has withdrawn support for the claim to Belize, which will strengthen the country's claim to self-determination. The Guyana Government also issued a statement supporting the people of Belize. Page 11

Olding Court
Olding Holdings (Richmond) applying for a court order to remove 17 children and their 14 children living in their derelict Palm Hotel. It claims parts of the structure are dangerous and squatters are running a fire hazard. Page 11

Political Equity
Equity in Equity failed today to write into its rule book that it should be "non-political and non-partisan". Left-winger Miss Redgrave said the move represented a major victory for the militants. Back Page

Power promise
The new Bangladesh regime aims to hand over power to elected representatives, President Mohammed Sayem, the new Chief Justice, said on Bangladesh radio. Page 7

Shop resigns
Bishop of Llandaff, the Rt. Ewri Stephen Thomas, has resigned. He has been summoned to appear before Cardiff diocesan next week charged with gross indecency. Page 6

Infidelity
A Cypriot plan mass rallies to remove the 1975 first-half consolidated net group income to Frs.198m. (122m.). Page 25

'Mission accomplished' claims radio

King Hassan calls off march into Spanish Sahara

BY OUR OWN CORRESPONDENT: Rabat, Nov. 9

King Hassan of Morocco astounded his 17m. subjects to-night by telling them that the 350,000 "peace marchers" had to withdraw from the Spanish Sahara and return to Moroccan territory.

After a three-week campaign that whipped up patriotic fervour bordering on national hysteria, as wave after wave of marchers swept southwards for the "glorious green march," the King told his listeners in a broadcast that the whole operation had to go into reverse.

The King said that the marchers had "obtained the desired results and attained the desired objective"—but he gave no hint as to what exactly had been achieved.

"We must solve the problem in another way and with other methods," he said. "A negotiated settlement would be possible only in a fraternal atmosphere far removed from pressure from one side or the other."

Already at least 200,000 of the 350,000 unarmed volunteers mustered by the King have penetrated the Western Sahara. But they have not gone far and are blocked by a powerful Spanish "dissuasion line" manned by the Foreign Legion and defended by missiles only seven miles from the border.

The effect of the King's announcement on the marchers in the desert was not immediately known but was expected to be a mixture of dismay and incomprehension. They had been given to understand they would march victoriously into El Aaiun, The King's announcement.

President Sadat returned home yesterday after his official visit to Paris last month, on his way to the U.S. President Giscard d'Estaing said that France would be prepared for Egypt to buy the aircraft if the necessary British consent was secured.

On Saturday night, as his last departure, President Sadat met representatives of the major arms manufacturers—the British Aircraft Corporation (the Jaguar), Hawker Siddeley, Rolls-Royce, Vickers, Ford, Thornycroft, Plessey and Marconi.

At a meeting with British businessmen on Friday evening, President Sadat emphasised that his talks with Mr. Harold Wilson, Prime Minister, had included nuclear material as well. He also suggested that British Leyland might replace engines for Soviet-made tanks and Rolls-Royce provide the same for transport aircraft.

Negotiations, which date back to last year, on factories to assemble the Westland Lynx helicopter and Hawker Siddeley Hawk trainer-ground attack aircraft are continuing. These would be financed by Arab oil money.

During his visit President Sadat, Mr. Ismail Fahmi, the Foreign Minister, and Dr. Zaki Shafie, Minister of Economics, were at pains to emphasise the importance of the concept of "bilateral co-operation" under which the capital of the Arab oil states and British technology could be combined for Egypt's development.

In Whitehall officials insisted that economic collaboration was as important an aspect of the talks as military supplies. With the emphasis on technical assistance rather than investment, the two sides discussed various possibilities including U.K. assistance with the creation of new cities and mineral exploitation. A team of British experts is expected to go to Egypt to survey phosphate and uranium deposits.

Meeting to-day on Prentice's future

MR. REG PRENTICE'S struggle to retain his Commons seat as Labour MP for Newham North-east reaches another critical stage to-day.

The Labour Party's organisation committee is to meet at Transport House this afternoon to discuss the report of an inquiry into the Newham constituency party's decision to replace Mr. Prentice, Minister for Overseas Development, as Labour candidate at the next general election.

The committee will decide what action it should recommend that the full national executive committee take about the affair. A final decision, which could virtually determine Mr. Prentice's political future, will be taken by the national executive at its next meeting on November 26.

Evidence given to the inquiry conducted by NEC members Mr. John Chalmers, Mr. Alec Kison and Mr. Tom Bradley, was circulated to all members of the organisation committee at the week-end.

But the inquiry team will not make known their conclusions until to-day's meeting.

Embarrassed

The committee can accept, reject or vary the Newham decision and most Labour MPs expect it to adopt the third course as the best means of resolving a dispute which has seriously embarrassed the party.

The widely-held view is that the committee will probably recommend a further test of opinion about Mr. Prentice's position within the Newham party as a whole.

The organisation committee to-day will also discuss a report by Mr. Reg Underhill, the party's national agent, on attempts by extreme left-wing groups to infiltrate the Labour Party.

Mr. Underhill is understood to have uncovered evidence of infiltration attempts in the TUC, the UCL, the Transport and General Workers' Union, the Labour movement at the threat and further action at this stage appears unlikely.



Mr. Foot, Mr. Healey and Mrs. Williams: meetings at the Treasury

Secret talks on pay policy

BY JOHN ELLIOTT, LABOUR EDITOR

MR. DENIS HEALEY, Chancellor of the Exchequer, has started the series of private talks with leaders of both sides of industry on wages and other economic affairs which will eventually lead on to consideration of a new pay policy next summer.

This follows agreement in August between the Government, CBI and TUC on a joint monitoring exercise of the five-week pay limit coupled with price rises, unemployment and other factors.

So far, there has been no detailed discussion of the wages policy which will take over from the £6 late next summer, although there will eventually have to be detailed consideration not only of how large any pay limit should be, but also of how much of it should be expressed in a flat-rate form.

Reflation

Before that, however, relationships between the Government and the TUC could be soured by the problem of unemployment. Next month, in the wake of the Paris economic summit, and of an EEC Ministerial conference involving leaders of both sides of industry, the TUC will decide how much pressure to put on the Government for a measure of reflation.

The TUC is unlikely to accept that the new IMF loan to the U.K. need be a hindrance to reflationary action, and union leaders are likely to press their case for more urgent action to stem any increase in unemployment, even though they know that this may well be resisted by the Government.

Sadat confident of U.K. arms and industry deals

BY RICHARD JOHNS

PRESIDENT SADAT returned home yesterday after his official visit to Paris last month, on his way to the U.S. President Giscard d'Estaing said that France would be prepared for Egypt to buy the aircraft if the necessary British consent was secured.

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At a restricted meeting on Saturday morning, President Sadat said: "A new understanding and a new look in the attitude of the Labour Government has been evident in the past year. He revealed how Dr. Henry Kissinger, U.S. Secretary of State, following the failure of his March shuttle, had asked Mr. Wilson to use his influence with Israeli leaders. "Mr. Wilson contacted the Israelis and he tried to help."

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Questioned whether he had asked Mr. Wilson if he could discuss with the Israeli leadership the possibility of their talking to the Palestine Liberation Organisation, he admitted, "I did discuss it."

Continued on Back Page

Leyland to rethink Egypt plan

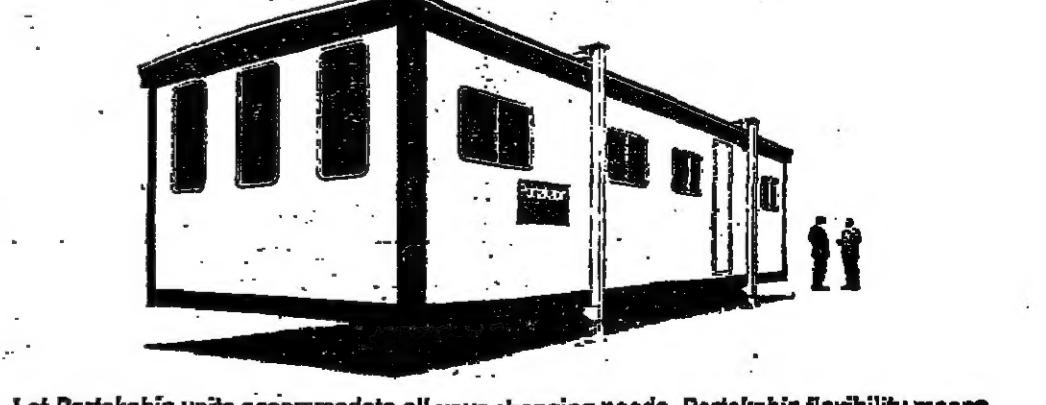
BY MICHAEL TINGAY

BRITISH LEYLAND is to rethink its involvement in Egypt. The result could be a larger, more comprehensive joint industrial venture, including the provision of engines for Soviet tanks.

Work on the planned Land Rover production line, the site for which had been fixed in Alexandria, will almost certainly be abandoned when this re-assessment has been completed.

Sir Ronald Edwards, the company's recently-appointed chairman, will head a delegation to Cairo in the near future for a re-examination of BL's involvement in the country.

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THE WEEK IN THE COURTS

Pressure of world trade brings changes in law

BY JUSTINIAN

COURTS OF LAW are not traditionally innovators. When therefore, twice in one day, long-standing rules of English law are overturned, reformers may be tempted to detect a genuine change of heart by the judges. The discerning commentator will note, however, that in both instances it was the pressure of international commerce that forced the English courts to bring English law into line with other comparable legal systems.

In *Mitani v. George Frank (Textiles)* the House of Lords held that, where in a commercial contract the money of account and the money of payment is a foreign currency, the English court can now give judgment in that foreign currency. For 350 years the invariable rule was that an English court could give judgment only in pounds sterling.

As recently as 1961 the House of Lords had reaffirmed the principle that, since sterling was a currency "of whose true value and real value there is no fellow in the firmament" the economic and financial stability of this country did not warrant any departure from the established rule. Now that stability has been replaced by the depreciation of the value of the pound.

Using their powers acquired in 1966, the Law Lords (at least four of the five, Lord Simon of Glaisdale dissenting), reversed their own ruling and swept away the rule which had left England the odd man out among the trading nations of the international community.

Payment date

The House of Lords went on to hold that the date of judgment was the moment for adjudging the debtor liable to pay in the foreign currency. This ruling gives rise to a host of procedural problems that will have to be worked out by the courts.

If the creditor wants to execute upon his judgment in this country he will ordinarily have to convert his foreign currency judgment into pounds sterling. The sheriff and his officers cannot seize any property of the debtor and sell it other than in pounds sterling. At what date, for example, will the conversion from the foreign currency into pounds sterling have to be calculated for the purposes of execution?

No less striking a change in the field of commercial litigation has been wrought by the decision of the Judicial Com-

mittee of the Privy Council in *The Owners of the Ship "Philippine" v. Walling Shipping (Hong Kong) Ltd and another*.

Few topics in the field of general international law have given rise to more extensive discussion among legal academics and practitioners than the topic of sovereign immunity.

Total immunity

Some countries, most notably the U.K., have applied the doctrine of the absolute immunity of foreign sovereigns in our courts.

The rule means that potential litigants are debarred from pursuing claims in the courts against foreign States or foreign State agencies, particularly claims arising from the commercial or trading activities of the foreign State or State agency.

In practice, a merchant's inability to sue a foreign Government with whom he trades is not a disaster. So long as manufacturers and traders are accustomed to arranging their affairs against the background of an unsatisfactory law, and for the most part disputes arising out of such transactions are referred to arbitration, it is a fact, however, that the scales of justice are unevenly balanced when the potential defendant to legal proceedings can bar any attempt to sue him by the plea of sovereign immunity.

In the case of the *Philippine Admiral* the Philippines Government had throughout the life of the ship operated her as an ordinary merchant ship carrying freight by carrying cargo. So long as a foreign government uses a ship as a mere trading vessel the concept of relative immunity has now become the law of England.

Old rule

In reversing the old rule, the Privy Council declined to follow a decision of the English Court of Appeal given 50 years ago according to which a foreign State-owned vessel engaged in trading activities pure and simple.

What happens if a foreign State claims a ship in the future for some different, and undoubtedly public purpose? Certainly, if it does use its vessel for a public purpose the immunity from suit will be up-

held. Courts may be faced with some ticklish problems.

Would the courts require any evidence to prove that the State intended, over and above the mere assertion that the vessel would be used for a public purpose? The courts might have to decide on the risk of contention whether the intention was formed in order to defeat a claim made against it.

The European Convention on State Immunity concluded by the Council of Europe in 1972 is the first serious attempt, at governmental level, to resolve the many difficulties of this topic. The U.K. is a signatory to that Convention, although no legislation has as yet been forthcoming.

Now that the law has been brought into line with the basic precept of the Convention, it ought to be possible for foreign States to sue in our courts, particularly claims arising from the commercial or trading activities of the foreign State or State agency.

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Rangers lack fire in their goalless draw

THERE WAS plenty of honest entertainment in the goalless draw between Queens Park Rangers and Tottenham at Shepherd's Bush.

Rangers, who would have topped the table if they had achieved their expected win, were something of a disappointment. They allowed themselves to be hustled and hustled to such an extent by a most determined Spurs that they were unable to exploit their superior skill and could even have lost their unbeaten home record, although on the overall run of the play, this would have been unfair.

In the first half, Spurs exerted greater pressure and created one of a highly industrious middle field, found time to create many problems down the left flank, but Rangers looked rather more like scoring. After the interval, however, the closing stages, especially the Rangers, on several occasions, went close to beating Jennings who, like his opposite number, Parkes, was in splendid form.

In many respects this game provided a classic example of why England will probably fail to qualify for the final stages of the European championship. On this showing, a Continental visitor would not only have been able to beat the five Rangers in Don Revie's squad by their ability, but would also have been unable to understand how they came to be there in the first place.

Gillard looked no better than a competent left-back, always liable to be in trouble against a

fast, clever winger, and not over-subtle. Towards the end, he shot at goal from some 15 yards outside the penalty area which, with Jennings between the posts, was taking optimism too far.

Francis, captain of England and a key figure in their midfield, would never have had either role if he were judged on Saturday's performance. Thomas, at his best an exciting, two-footed winger, seemed unaware of this until the last 10 minutes.

Bowles showed considerable dexterity on the ground, but was not as consistently dangerous up front as Spurs' young centre-forward, Jones.

Calibre

Only Parkes and occasionally Bowles, of the five in the national squad, displayed the class expected from international, and which, somewhat ironically, McIlkenny demonstrated that he still possessed. How long ago was it when Arsenal decided he was over the top?

This game suggested that the English First Division is not the ideal breeding place for footballers of the highest calibre, because fear of failure has been inclined to mean greater emphasis on effort than on skill.

Certainly, the basic ball control and distribution of a high percentage of the players was lacking. Yet QPR are recognised as one of the most talented teams in the country.

Gulf tanker activity remains spasmodic

ACTIVITY in the Persian Gulf tanker spot chartering market last week was spasmodic, especially in the larger size ranges, and the low level of charter rates seemed to reflect a lack of interest in the market.

One leading broker, John I. Jacobs, says in his weekly report: "The bulk of inquiry continues to emanate from New York and the fact that so few requirements are for vessels over 100,000 tons evidences the continuing lack of any real substance in current demand."

Lambert Brothers Shipbroking, in its report, says that the "tone" is generally weaker for all destinations in U.K. tanker charter market.

"There is approximately 9.5m. cargo tons of tanker tonnage available unfixed between now and end-November—about 23 units of 100,000 tons size up to 250,000 tons (tankers of over 300,000 tons), with a similar number in the 100,000 to 150,000 tons bracket and 30 or so units of lesser size."

Lambert adds: "It seems highly improbable that we shall see any upsurge in demand anywhere nearly sufficient to absorb this volume of tonnage over the next three weeks so all the factors would seem to indicate a continuance of the current depressed market conditions."

Determined Wallabies defeat disorganised London

LONDON—COUNTIES finished their match against Australia with a great flourish as Ripley, Martin and Adams set up a perfect ruck on the Australian 25.

London work at the rucks was shown up by the London players, whose lax kicking gave the visitors an opportunity to climb up out of impending trouble.

The line-out was an interesting sight in the middle and doing exceptionally well. Australia player to watch.

The ball was moved swiftly via Lawson, Bennett, Rutter and Rutter to Wyatt, who rounded off Monaghan to score, reducing their losing margin by four points in a final score of 20-11.

It underlined the early negligence and disarray of the team's back play. With a generous supply of ball, London three-quarters persisted in cutting corners, but they must beware of collapsing the scrum since it is dangerous and costly in terms of penalties.

Australia have principally to thank their back row, where Louie ran impressively and supported actively. He is a player of class who should develop even further as the tour progresses.

Pearse worked extremely hard and, with a magnificent kicking, made the Australian front row, notably Hillhouse and Finnane, kept up the pace. That was the difference between the two sides, quickly, enthusiastically and with intent it meant it; London merely went through the motions.

Hawser settled down after an uncertain beginning to play more assuredly, but he was not as good as he had been in the first half. He had a man of similar intention in 'Bernie' who added the cutting edge to the scrum attack, but the ball moved right, Australia had a powerful triangle of Berne, Batch and McLean. This trioka ran with a determination that (Wyatt excepted) the London half-backs showed little appreciation of the forward effort.

Bennett, now an experienced international, had one of those casual days, neither kicking well nor attacking with any appetite. His reluctance, inability to widen the game and played intelligently and kicked the dead ball quite exceptionally. "It must have been exasperating for the forwards, but they were just consciously lost possession, especially from the successful scrum at the line-out where Ripley palmed well to Martin and then to Smart.

Bucknell and Biggar consistently retreated and returned, but they could not dominate a scrum, one or two typical charges, but his distribution at the tackle let him down once again. The

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Rugged, but Lancashire survive

BY STUART ALEXANDER

LANCASHIRE managed to survive Northumberland's rugged challenge at Manchester's new Cheadle Hulme ground. On Saturday to win by 13 points to 12—a try and three penalties to four penalties.

As the score suggests, it was a close match, and Northumberland did easily enough to deserve a win. Yet although they enjoyed a considerable territorial advantage, they could not capitalise on their more imaginative and more attacking play.

The struggle between the opposing forwards was relentless until the end. Lancashire were holding Cotton, Trickey, Beaumont, O'Driscoll of London, Irish, and captain Tony Neary, Lancashire try in a brilliant McMillen and Peckford run, solid Northumberland pack led by captain Roger Uttley, and winger Pye's equally brilliant strengthened by Scottish inter- and well-timed tackle.

The first try came from Jack Northumberland were quick to Partington (29 minutes) when defence.

The rucks, took a good share of Northumberland's near their own line-out ball, and held the 25, took the secondary heel from a broken-down set scrum only set scrums, although Cotton gave to be robbed by Lancashire's scrum-half, Mickey Veir, who hard time. Midway through the second half, Northumberland were having trouble controlling Partington away and over.

Northumberland's reply in penalties only was disappointing, as was their success rate with their kicks—four from 12 attempts. Scrum-half, Young, kicked all four, but retired because of a right-leg injury.

As Brian Keenleyside, who other Lancashire winger Richards looked by far the most dangerous runner on the field, accurate and punishing kick out of defence, missed all his goal attempts, including three in the first eight minutes.

Lancashire full-back Kevin O'Brien kicked the three penalties, and caught cleanly to make some brave marks in defence.

YACHTING

BY ALEC BEILBY

Ban on tuning-up pace boats

DURING THE past week London has seen a gathering of the widest possible variety of the yachting community at the annual meeting of the International Yacht Racing Union.

Delegates representing 72 member countries, divided into 10 sub-committees, met to discuss all that concerns yachting, from the Olympic to the humblest competitive sailor.

This year, three problems became the highlights of the week. First the Canadians, who will run the Olympic Regatta at Kingston, Ontario, next summer and the use of tuning-up pace comparing boats by crew before the Games and the use of anything but official launches as team support craft.

Secondly, fees from member states according to the size of national sailing authorities to the

union will be increased to meet rising costs and, thirdly, the interest of yachting in the non-competitive side of the sport of sailing.

The convention over tuning-craft and support boats came after observations by the Canadians at Kiel in the 1972 Games. Several competitors, it was claimed, in some quarters, swapped most identical boats during the Games to suit the prevailing weather, and were receiving secret signals by radio from team support boats at different points of the course.

At times it seemed to observers as if the use of tuning-up pace comparing boats by crew before the Games and the use of anything but official launches as team support craft.

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accepted, but the problems can hardly be helped by the relative state of yachting internationally and the fact that the IYRU headquarters are in London.

The final move, to involve the union in such matters as international national frequencies for cruising yachts, the bureaucracy surrounding yachmen cruising from one country to another and involvement in the standardisation of buoyage led to some uneasy shuffling of the feet.

When racing offshore internationally, yachts already conform to the IYRU rules in daylight and at night, or where other shipping is involved, the IYRU seemed to be getting a little out of its depth.

RACING

BY DARE WIGAN

Anchovy Toast for Chepstow

THE FINAL stage of the flat racing season that ends with the Merceur, three times the mercurial of unsavoury gambles, day begins at Chepstow this afternoon, when most backers will expect Anchovy Toast to win the Scout Handicap (3.15).

Such confidence is unlikely to be misplaced, for Ryan Jarvis's filly was a convincing winner at Newmarket ten days ago from Tour de Force and Majorcy, each of whom had won his previous race.

Admittedly she was receiving plenty of weight from the other two, but even with a 7 lb penalty she has only 8 st 9 lb to carry here, and the opposition does not look particularly formidable.

Another recent winner who is likely to justify favouritism is Jellodine in Div. One of the Templegate Plate (12.15). This, too, can be said to have won ten lengths to spare over Sweet Lad at Lingfield last Monday.

Elaine Mellor, with the lady riders' championship securely under her girdle, partners Branded for her husband in the Madeleine Ladies' Handicap (12.45).

Branded, bought out of M. F. Easterby's Mallow stable for 4,800 guineas at the Ascot August sales, presumably with hurdling as the main objective, has nevertheless won four races this season and finished fourth (when ridden by Mrs. Mellor) in a similar type of event at Lingfield in September.

He will, I think, be too good for Double Blush, though the last-named will also have the benefit of strong handling, in

Irrespective of whether Kent is successful with Young Arthur, the Goring-Novels Handicap with New Zealand importation Grand Canyon, who defeated the smart Gunner Smith at Sandown, the other day and who will have a considerable benefit from the outfit.

At Nottingham Sweet Joe, a useful performer on the flat, ran away with his first race over the minor obstacles at Cheltenham last month, is the probable winner of the valuable Merit 3-year-old hurdle (2.0).

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BANK RETURN

Wednesday Inc. (+) or Dec. (-)

in £ millions

Banking Department

Capital

Public Deposits

Savings Deposits

Borrowings

Assets

Liabilities

Total

Total

Total

Total

Total

Total

Total

Total

Total

Total

Radio

BBC 1

* Indicates programme in black and white.

9.30 a.m. For Schools, Colleges, 10.45 You and Me, 11.00 For Schools, Colleges, 12.10 p.m. Anno Domini, 12.55 News, 1.00 Pebble, 1.15 Quality Time, 1.30 Thomas, 2.01 For Schools, Colleges, 3.55 Regional News (except London), 4.00 Play School, 4.20 Ascent, 4.30 Jackson, 4.45 Peter, 5.10 John Green, Newround, 5.20 Inch High Private Eye, 5.40 Magic Roundabout, 5.45 News, 6.00 The Goodies, 6.20 Angel, 6.30 Panorama, 6.40 News, 6.55 The Monday Film.

"Quatermass and the Pit"

11.00 The Lord Mayor's Banquet, 11.55 Regional News.

All Regions as BBC-1 except at the following times—

Wales—1.45-2.00 p.m. Pili Pala, 2.15-2.30 For Schools in Wales, 2.45-3.00 Wales Today, 3.15-3.30 Huddle, 3.45-3.55 Northern Cavalry, starring Randolph Scott, 10.35-11.00 Kane on Monday, 11.25 News and Weather for Wales.

Scotland—11.00-11.20 a.m. For Schools in Scotland, 2.55-3.00 p.m. Guidance and Counselling, 6.00-6.50 Reporting Scotland, 11.00-11.25 Public Account, 11.35 Scottish News Summary.

Northern Ireland—3.55-4.00 p.m. Northern Ireland News, 6.00-6.50 News Around Six, 6.50-7.20 Castle Concert, 11.25 Northern Ireland News Headlines.

England—6.00-6.50 p.m. Look North (from Leeds, Manchester, Newcastle); Midlands Today (from Birmingham); Look East (from Norwich); Points West (from Bristol); South Today (from Southampton); Spotlight South-West (from Plymouth).

BBC 2

11.00 a.m. Play School, 3.00 p.m. On the National Health, 3.30 Homes from Home, 7.05 The Selling Line, 7.25 Weather, 7.30 Newsday, 8.10 The Waltons, 9.00 Prometheus: The Life of Balzac by André Maurois, 9.50 Chronicle, 10.40 The Cost of the Daily News, 11.45-11.55 Closedown: Martin Jarvis reads "Lucy" by Christy Brown.

LONDON

9.30 a.m. Schools Programmes, 10.20 Squash Rackets, 11.00 Schools Programmes, 12.00 Noddy, 12.10 a.m. Rickman, 12.20 Mum's the Word, 1.00 First Report: News, FT Index, 1.20 Lunch-time Today, 1.50 Ennery-John Parry, 2.00 News, 2.15 The Impressions, 2.30 The Eight on Men, starring Lee Marvin, 3.55 General Hospital, 4.25 Clapperboard, 4.30 Hogg's, 4.35 And Mother Makes Five, 5.00 News from ITN, 6.00 Today, 6.45 Opportunity Knocks, 7.20 Coronation Street, 7.30 The Cuckoo Waltz, 8.20 World in Action, 9.00 The Sweeney, 10.00 News, 10.20 Arts Bazaar, 11.00 The Streets of San Francisco, 11.35 Adoption.

GRAMPIAN

1.20 a.m. News, 2.00 Headlines, 2.30 Monday Morning "Copper Canyon" starring Ray Milland and Hedy Lamarr, 3.00 The Sunday Paper, 3.15 The Scottish Soldier, 3.30 The Scottish Soldier, 3.45 The Scottish Soldier, 3.55 The Scottish Soldier, 4.00 The Scottish Soldier, 4.15 The Scottish Soldier, 4.30 The Scottish Soldier, 4.45 The Scottish Soldier, 4.55 The Scottish Soldier, 5.00 The Scottish Soldier, 5.15 The Scottish Soldier, 5.30 The Scottish Soldier, 5.45 The Scottish Soldier, 5.55 The Scottish Soldier, 6.00 The Scottish Soldier, 6.15 The Scottish Soldier, 6.30 The Scottish Soldier, 6.45 The Scottish Soldier, 6.55 The Scottish Soldier, 7.00 The Scottish Soldier, 7.15 The Scottish Soldier, 7.30 The Scottish Soldier, 7.45 The Scottish Soldier, 7.55 The Scottish Soldier, 8.00 The Scottish Soldier, 8.15 The Scottish Soldier, 8.30 The Scottish Soldier, 8.45 The Scottish Soldier, 8.55 The Scottish Soldier, 9.00 The Scottish Soldier, 9.15 The Scottish Soldier, 9.30 The Scottish Soldier, 9.45 The Scottish Soldier, 9.55 The Scottish Soldier, 10.00 The Scottish Soldier, 10.15 The Scottish Soldier, 10.30 The Scottish Soldier, 10.45 The Scottish Soldier, 10.55 The Scottish Soldier, 11.00 The Scottish Soldier, 11.15 The Scottish Soldier, 11.30 The Scottish Soldier, 11.45 The Scottish Soldier, 11.55 The Scottish Soldier, 12.00 The Scottish Soldier, 12.15 The Scottish Soldier, 12.30 The Scottish Soldier, 12.45 The Scottish Soldier, 12.55 The Scottish Soldier, 1.00 The Scottish Soldier, 1.15 The Scottish Soldier, 1.30 The Scottish Soldier, 1.45 The Scottish Soldier, 1.55 The Scottish Soldier, 2.00 The Scottish Soldier, 2.15 The Scottish Soldier, 2.30 The Scottish Soldier, 2.45 The Scottish Soldier, 2.55 The Scottish Soldier, 3.00 The Scottish Soldier, 3.15 The Scottish Soldier, 3.30 The Scottish Soldier, 3.45 The Scottish Soldier, 3.55 The Scottish Soldier, 4.00 The Scottish Soldier, 4.15 The Scottish Soldier, 4.30 The Scottish Soldier, 4.45 The Scottish Soldier, 4.55 The Scottish Soldier, 5.00 The Scottish Soldier, 5.15 The Scottish Soldier, 5.30 The Scottish Soldier, 5.45 The Scottish Soldier, 5.55 The Scottish Soldier, 6.00 The Scottish Soldier, 6.15 The Scottish Soldier, 6.30 The Scottish Soldier, 6.45 The Scottish Soldier, 6.55 The Scottish Soldier, 7.00 The Scottish Soldier, 7.15 The Scottish Soldier, 7.30 The Scottish Soldier, 7.45 The Scottish Soldier, 7.55 The Scottish Soldier, 8.00 The Scottish Soldier, 8.15 The Scottish Soldier, 8.30 The Scottish Soldier, 8.45 The Scottish Soldier, 8.55 The Scottish Soldier, 9.00 The Scottish Soldier, 9.15 The Scottish Soldier, 9.30 The Scottish Soldier, 9.45 The Scottish Soldier, 9.55 The Scottish Soldier, 10.00 The Scottish Soldier, 10.15 The Scottish Soldier, 10.30 The Scottish Soldier, 10.45 The Scottish Soldier, 10.55 The Scottish Soldier, 11.00 The Scottish Soldier, 11.15 The Scottish Soldier, 11.30 The Scottish Soldier, 11.45 The Scottish Soldier, 11.55 The Scottish Soldier, 12.00 The Scottish Soldier, 12.15 The Scottish Soldier, 12.30 The Scottish Soldier, 12.45 The Scottish Soldier, 12.55 The Scottish Soldier, 1.00 The Scottish Soldier, 1.15 The Scottish Soldier, 1.30 The Scottish Soldier, 1.45 The Scottish Soldier, 1.55 The Scottish Soldier, 2.00 The Scottish Soldier, 2.15

Opening week at the Met

by ANDREW PORTER

Someone remarked that "God save the Queen" might have been the anthem at the start of the season here. The first new production at the Metropolitan was Patrick Libby's *Costa Rica*, with Elizabeth Harwood, Anne Howell and Ryland Davies made their Met debuts in it. The next, three days later, was John Dexter's of *La Gioconda*. Rita Hunter's Norma is due soon. Meanwhile, next door at the City Opera, John Cox was rehearsing *The Master-singers*, with Norman Bailey as its protagonist and Car Jones as its designer. The Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center built its first concert around Thea Musgrave's *Space Play*; Britten's Fifth Canticale and a new quintet for piano and winds commissioned from Lennox Berkeley figure on later bills.

At a Press conference in Salzburg this summer, James Levine, artistic co-director with Mr. Dexter of the Metropolitan, expressed his hope of one day re-ordering their house somewhat along Covent Garden lines: sharing it with a ballet company, and clustering performances which could then be given with stable and properly rehearsed casts. Meanwhile the old system reigns. In the first six days of its season the company played five different operas, two of them twice: *Le Siège de Corinthe*, Boris Godunov, *Costa Rica*, *La Gioconda*, *La Traviata*. The City Opera in its first four days played five: *Salome*, *I puritani*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Turandot*, and *La traviata*. Eight works, this season, are being done at both houses: *Figaro*, *I puritani*, *Il barbiere*, *La traviata*, *Die Fledermaus*, *Carmen*, *Butterfly*, and *Ariadne auf Naxos*.



Martina Arroyo in "La Gioconda"

Ita Marina. *La Gioconda*, a big show, was the second production put on in the new house when it opened in 1966. It has large, opulent décor traditional by Benji Montresor. Christine Nilsson, Nordica, Desjardins, Ponselle and Milanov have been the famous Met *Giocondas*, and the opera is not worth doing without one. The bottom of Martina Arroyo's voice is too weak to compass the role effectively, and her whole manner was mild, undramatic, and visually rather clumsy. Although this scene, she had the right fire, and she alone showed much stage presence. The new tenor, Giorgio Casellato-Lamberti, looks handsome, and has a serviceable if unremarkable voice, but did nothing interesting or imaginative. Met's *Mamma* was an alert, not an imposing Barnaba. Fedora Barbieri, whose *Quickly* last season was still enjoyable, boomed out such of *La Gioconda*'s notes as the comic still manages and warily seemed the others. A new bass, Malcolm Smith, was a passable Alvaro, and Giuseppe Patané the able conductor.

The evening was disappointing in several ways. It is years since I have seen Miss Arroyo, who has so warm, ample, and beautiful a voice, used effectively. Not since that Covent Garden *Leonora*, in fact, as *Lady Macbeth* at the Met, but from his Malatesta and Falstaff, seasoned with a dash of his Scarpia, could deduce rather such an Alfonso as Mr. Casellato-Lamberti provided. Kazimierz Kord, who the night before had conducted Boris, adopted several uncommonly slow tempi with such conviction that he made them persuasive.

Bollo was a poor show. There was a new cast, Teresa Kubacki could probably be a pleasing Amelia if she were taught the role properly, but she sang the upward span of "Consentimi Signora" as separate notes, and often failed to join elsewhere. Later in the evening she hit several wrong notes, Nicolai Gedda gave the impression of trying to sing consistently at the top of a not very large voice (except for an elegantly turned "E schenno a folia"). Never much of an actor, he gave his Gustavus-the Swedish setting is used—a half-hearted touch of the "Gentile" reading, and waddled about rather than romantically striding the stage. Louis Quilico's Ankerström was solid of voice but also solid in manner. Maureen Forrester did not carry the guns for Ulrica. Roberta Peters' spunky, dapper Oscar was the high point. Under Henry Lewis, the score fell to pieces. The production is an old one of Renner's (1962) in scenery by

ing the footlights); it is slight, but has the merits of being uncluttered and unemphatic and of seeming to reduce the Met stage to a Glyndebourne shape and size. Mr. Libby's production has the great merit of being lyrical and uncluttered: a polished study of human behaviour, bewitching, as *Costa* should be, entertaining, often touching—and not a romp.

Besides the three Britteners there was a Gagliardo, a fourth Met debutant, Richard Stilwell. His baritone is uncommonly steady and definite, and in his performances there is always a hint of patrician reserve; that is oddly attractive. This Gagliardo had nothing in common with the jolly vulgarian played by Robert Kerr in Covent Garden's last *Costa*; and he was the more earnestly romantic of the pair. Mr. Davies's Ferrando had his twinkly moments, though his two arias (the third, "Ab lo veggio" was omitted) were done with a certain sentiment.

Miss Harwood's Floridilla was gentle, lyrical, and unexaggerated, "Viennese" sometimes in a mannered way, when distinctness was sacrificed to a "melting phrase" and at all times in the admirable way of voicing everything as beautifully as possible. Hers was a very ambitious kind of performance, not quite evenly executed, but quite evenly executed, at its best. Miss Howell's Dorabella had plenty of character and musical finesse, neither her voice nor Mr. Davies's was quite first rate; the attraction of the evening was a whole lot less in individual vocal prowess than in the portrayal of four "real people" by four artists musically and dramatic-

ally sensitive to the score and to one another.

Colette Boky's Despina was lively, a little peaky at the top. Renato Capecchi, with very little voice (except in the trio "Soave sia il vento," which he seems to regard as a bass solo while two voices murmur above), achieved prodigious of virtuosos inflexion. I never saw Stabile in the part, but from his Malatesta and Falstaff, seasoned with a dash of his Scarpia, could deduce rather such an Alfonso as Mr. Casellato-Lamberti provided. Kazimierz Kord, who the night before had conducted Boris, adopted several uncommonly slow tempi with such conviction that he made them persuasive.

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Covent Garden

Un ballo in maschera

by GILLIAN WIDDICOMBE

Un ballo in maschera is the most realistic of Verdi's tragic stories. Each step towards the king's assassination is aided by the irony, indiscretion, foolishness and obstinacy of human emotions as well as by the more obvious extremes of love, anger, honour and temptation. And the love scene in Act I is the most extended and flowing ever written by Verdi. It needs and deserves realistic, plausible acting, as well as olden, lyrical singing. And though Otto Schenk's production, predominantly dull and static, had last January with three convincing characterisations: an upstart Amelia, a stiff Renato, and a loveable, flamboyantly manic Gustavo. That trio as been turned upside-down by the present revival, and the result is a little disconcerting. It brings Carlo Bergonzi back to Covent Garden as Gustavo; an ironic alert, but wooden king, his voice small, and past its prime; has lost its grace and ing. But the loss is disguised with

extraordinary art and what remains is protected with tension. Admittedly, Verdi places the tenor arias very favourably in *Ballo*: after the exhausting second act, an hour or so to recover in the dressing-room before the short, magnificent solo scene, and the cranky lingering of the assassination. However, on Friday, Bergonzi did not take the opportunity to sing the second act climaxes with abandon; everything was done elegantly with neat articulation and correct dynamic grading, especially those passages which he so deliciously sang with a darkened, tenor will usually sustain them fortissimo. "E scherzo" he sang jokingly throughout; neither his voice nor Mr. Davies's was quite first rate; the attraction of the evening was a whole lot less in individual vocal prowess than in the portrayal of four "real people" by four artists musically and dramatic-



Sherrill Milnes, Gwynne Howell and Forbes Robinson

ing, lovable character, is now the wretched husband. Mr. Milnes was in fine voice on Friday: the opening aria blandly done, but "eri tu" splendidly sung with a nicely sustained line, and a fierce but not forced expression. His characterisation seemed particularly welcome since it included some excellent, dramatic reacting to the conspirators' mocking and the wastefulness of the assassination.

Amelia is a sketchy role, best served by a soprano with strong personal charm. Gilda Cruz-Romo's pianissimo was ravishing, her tone fine and warm, though generously scaled down to match Bergonzi on Friday evening. Her expression was touching, but nun-like and gentle, hardly a romantic, impulsive heroine. Reri Grist's Oscar is retained from the original cast, and is in better vocal form this time, her arias sung with bright, sparkling tone. Edward Downes has taken over the conducting. He dragged the third act oddly, but cared for his singers solicitously.

Sherman, Cardiff

Aneurin Bevan Struggles against the Iron Heel

by B. A. YOUNG

It's too early yet to put Aneurin Bevan on the stage. He is too familiar still, his ambitions and what he did about them (or didn't do) still matter in our lives. But before going into that more deeply it is interesting to speculate why the Welsh Drama Company should have commissioned David Illingworth to write a piece about him.

The company is an English-language company and so has a problem in being sufficiently Welsh. Welsh players are employed whenever possible, but good Welsh plays in English are few and far between. Earlier this year the company played *Adam Richards*, the Welsh dropper with a Welshman in the lead. As it turned out, the play was anti-Welsh Nationalist and the Welsh lead played a Cockney.

There is as yet little sign that the Welsh players are or can distinguish Welsh players from English or Scottish ones, yet it is clearly proper that the company should take a Welsh lead, appreciated or not. Bevan, the first national hero since the devalued Lloyd George, and though his triumphs were not particularly oriented towards

Wales, at any rate it was the Welsh voters of Ebbw Vale who kept him in power.

David Illingworth and his director (and researcher) Howard Davies have met the problem of over-familiarity by under-stressing the personalities surrounding their hero. Even Bevan himself as Colin McCormack plays him is not a simulacrum like George Colthur's Churchill in *Soldiers*. He wears the right kind of clothes (smarter and smarter as he ascends the social scale) and stands in the right positions. His accent is pretty exact, the voice has the right shrillness and the slight stammer, though without it's sounded like w's, apparently a hallmark of Socialist success. But this is all, and enough.

What emerges is genuine Bevan, because the soul of Bevan has been put into it, and this is what we need. No one cares what Hamlet looked like or how he spoke, yet we know Hamlet intimately. McCormack gives us not the cocky figure the cartoonists drew but the man whose name will be found in the history books of the future, even if only in a footnote.

Could that, I wonder, be his fate? Mr. Illingworth has traced his hero's progress from youth to death, through the Miners' Federation, the Tredegar UDC, the County Council, the House of Commons, the Cabinet; through the General Strike, the various rifts with Labour, the appointments to the Ministries of Health and Labour; ending on the disastrous note of the 1957 speech at Brighton defending British nuclear weapons.

I can't believe the material is chosen deliberately to provoke this result, but what we see is a succession of failures. (Even the National Health Service, once his pride, now looks pretty dicky.) Between 1952 and 1956 he was beaten in his bids for the deputy leadership, the treasurer-ship and the leadership of the Labour Party. He died in 1960: what had he achieved? Can it be that Mr. Illingworth's title is not catchpenny politics but satire?

The production makes no attempt at extraneous theatrical interest, but stands or falls by the words, many of them taken good. The play now moves to Aberystwyth, Cwmbran, Bangor and Swansea. Its progress will be interesting.

of the news highlights, pattern of seven men and a woman in everyday dress suggests instantly any kind of meeting from an action group to the Chamber of the House. The words are all—sometimes rousing, sometimes terrifyingly silly (There should be no rearmament in Britain, said Bevan in 1939, until the people could be sure on which side the Government stood and they could only be sure of that with a Labour Government in office).

I am not over-fond of documentary theatre, but I found this sporadically moving. It might have been more so if fewer, more important matters had been chosen rather than this tapestry of a whole public life.

Is it the answer to the problem of current Welsh drama? In Tredegar, where the company gave an opening performance at the Miners' Welfare Hall, it seemed at first as if Bevan's fellow-townsmen had lost interest in him, but a late advertisement in the local paper filled the 700 odd seats of the house. In Cardiff the attendance has been good. The play now moves to Aberystwyth, Cwmbran, Bangor and Swansea. Its progress will be interesting.

Greenwich Theatre

Fallen Angels

by B. A. YOUNG

No one could call *Fallen Angels* a masterpiece of wit and sophistication, but it is then a well-made comedy; but it is a remarkable advance over Noel Coward's previous play, *The Vortex*. The *Vortex* is a representation (as Coward saw it) of contemporary society, a real people involved in such a degree that audiences found them positively alarming. To-day the play is totally unconvincing. *Fallen Angels*, on the other hand, is nothing but a comic soufflé, its characters no more than cleverly designed puppets. It comes up as fresh as paint.

The fact is that Coward was really not very good at the serious bit. His characters, even as late as his final *Suite in Three Keys*, had little conviction about them when he meant us to believe in them. But he had an immense talent for the kind

Coliseum

The Merry Widow

by ELIZABETH FORBES

The English National Opera revived its three-year-old production of *The Merry Widow* last week at the Coliseum. Neither the original producer nor the original designer is mentioned in the programme credits, though John Cox is acknowledged as part author of the lyrics and sole author of the dialogue, while illustrations of costume designs by Elizabeth Dalton are still shown. The production as it now stands has indeed been much altered, especially in the third act. Rehearsed by David Ritch, the staging is efficient and will no doubt gain in smoothness as apparent spontaneity after a few more performances.

Lehar's marvellously tuneful, cunningly written score demands the most careful, affectionate treatment. Owain Arwel Hughes, conducting for the first time at the Coliseum, obviously likes it well enough, but liking is not love, and some of his tempos are too rigid. He shapes the famous waltz idiomatically, but sometimes hushes the singers. This criticism does not apply to "Vilja," in which Mr. Arwel Hughes supported Lois McDonnell with intricate fact. Miss McDonnell has become a splendid Hanna Glawari, who now points her dialogue as well as she sings the music. Her Pontevodian costume is especially becoming, and her tall, statuesque good looks are perfectly in period. Miss John Wakefield is Danilo: in every respect but one he is a wheel.

superb interpreter of the role, handsome, charming, a good dancer with excellent diction, she effortlessly projects the dialogue. Unfortunately he is at present in very poor voice. In many ways this does not matter. The first London Danilo, Joseph Coyne, could not sing at all, though this fact was hidden from Lehar until the dress rehearsal, when it was too late for him to protest. Coyne recited most of his songs, and made such a success of "There once were two royal children" that the composer urged later Danilos to treat that number as melodrama, apparent spontaneity after a few more performances.

Ann Hood repeats her vivid well-characterised Valencienne. She has a new admirer in Anthony Roden, whose Camille is slyly acted and slyly sung, though with a sign here and there that he may become more sympathetic when he is more relaxed. Other newcomers to the cast include Richard Jackson as Cascada, Paul Arden-Griffith as St. Brice and Michael Follis as Kromow. They all throw themselves with energy into the show, stopping "Women" septet, but for enthusiasm and joie de vivre these relative youngsters are surpassed by the veteran Denis Dowling, as Baron Mirko Zeta. The grisesettes at Maxim's are rather a staid lot, though Miss Hood still bravely turns a cartwheel.

The Entertainment Guide is on Page 29

Fortune

The Charles Pierce Show

by MICHAEL COVENEY

It is, I suppose, bold of a commercial management that has in the past claimed to present family entertainment to bring to London "California's favourite male actress" in a show aimed specifically at a coterie audience.

The cabaret is full of imperiousness of favourite gay pin-ups: Katherine Hepburn in a trouser suit with a scrambled script full of references to little Sebastian who came suddenly last summer; Betty Davis dealing with a faintly hysterical Baby Jane Crawford clumping down the stairs in her wheel-chair and a slovenly, drunken Miss Bankhead at a Hollywood cocktail party; Gloria Swanson as Norma Desmond coasting down Sunset Boulevard; and, to finish with, Pierette MacDonald floating out towards that blue horizon on a floral swing that lights up and refuses to come down.

Mr. Pierce's attitude to female sexual activity is nudging and unpleasant. He gags about Liberace making film in which he gets married to a woman—"a sort of science fiction horror movie." The comment on heterosexuality as something unnatural and sickening is more powerful than the cheap laugh at Liberace's expense. Heterosexuality is also mocked: in a blacked-out quickie, we hear the tune of "Strangers in the Night," the sound of cracking whips and an orgasmic yelp of release. Sex in any shape or form is in evidence, and Mike Hall makes the romantic Frenchman just what he should be in this context, a passé and over-dressed head waiter off duty. Joyce Grant as the Admirable Saunders, the omniscient housemaid, knows precisely the style required, with the ghost of a confidential smile for the audience as she scores her points.

James Rose-Evans is the director, and the curtained drawing-room with its pretty painted door-panels is the work of Peter Rice.



Charles Pierce

Harold Fielding is the producer, and the show is an evening with Charles Pierce who makes Danny La Rue look like Julie Andrews. Mr. Pierce is an unimpressive, slightly gay drag actor rather than a female impersonator, drily describing himself as a "humorous sexual" and not a "homosexual." ("We all know what they are—folks who like sex in the home").

Arts

Orlando the Marmalade Cat buys a cottage

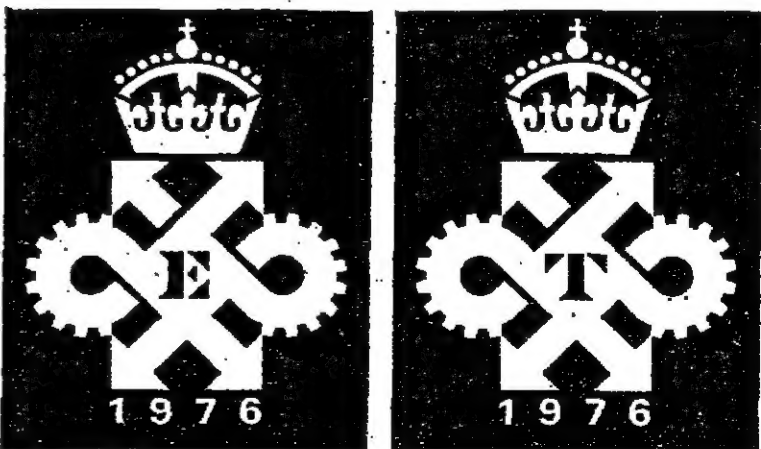
The first staged version of one of Kathleen Hale's books featuring the character she created in the thirties is playing at the Arts Theatre from November 30. Playing, that is, to packed houses of adult and child fans of Orlando the marmalade cat.

The Unicorn stage story includes puppets and people-size characters. Orlando, Grace, and their kittens Pansy, Blanche and Tinkle are life-size in their own environment, that is in the cat-neck of the woods, but when juxtaposed with their Master and his human colleagues, Orlando and the kittens are reduced to hand-manipulated puppets. Either king-size or cat-size, the enchantment is constant. William Corlett has adapted the book for a show intended for

4 to 10 year olds and his dialogue is beautifully tailored to fit this age-group. The danger of boredom arising from youngsters' fighting to comprehend unfamiliar and high-blown multisyllables is not encountered here. Visually too, the production is a story-book delight. All the sets and stage effects and fuzzy-furry costumes add up to a sumptuous package deal.

Derek Fuke is the impressive, bordering on the slightly pompous Orlando, Catiline Hunt his adoring consort and Anita Dobson, Penny Casdagli and Duncan Faber the gleefully or squabbling siblings. No credit is given to the puppet controller whose nameless, faceless talents were, nevertheless, patiently received.

DEBORAH PICKERING



Now there are two Queen's Awards.

The Queen's Award to Industry Scheme has been reviewed and in future there will be two separate Awards entitled:

- "The Queen's Award for Export Achievement" and
- "The Queen's Award for Technological Achievement"

The first of the new style Awards will be made in 1976 and the lists of Award winners will be announced on the Queen's personal birthday, 21st April. General arrangements and selection procedures remain basically the same as before but eligibility for the Export Award has been extended to certain

classes of indirect exporting and to export agents.

For full details about eligibility and for application forms get in touch with The Secretary, The Queen's Awards Office, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET, Telephone number 01-222 2277, telex 27366.

Any industrial unit based in the United Kingdom, Channel Islands or Isle of Man, producing goods or providing services, may apply irrespective of size.

Please send in your application as soon as possible.

The closing date for the 1976 Awards is 30 November 1975.

HOME NEWS

Leyland shifts to quality car market in Japan

BY TERRY DODSWORTH, MOTOR INDUSTRY CORRESPONDENT

TOKYO, Nov. 9.

BRITISH LEYLAND is making a decisive switch in its marketing tactics in Japan, abandoning all attempts to compete in the popular end of the market and shifting its attention to its quality cars.

A team of Leyland International executives is due in Tokyo this week to begin detailed talks on the company's plans with Shintokyo Motors, its main Japanese distributor.

The basis of the meeting was mapped out at preliminary talks in London. Mr. Paul Sung, president of Shintokyo, said at the week-end.

The move comes at a sensitive time in the development of motor industry trade between Japan and the U.K. It comes after a spell of growing pressure by trade unions in Britain for import controls against Japanese cars and a series of speeches from Mr. Peter Shore, Trade Secretary, saying that Japanese imports to the U.K. must be damped down and that the Japanese should present more opportunities in their own market for British-built cars.

The Japanese have said repeatedly that the failure of British cars in Japan is due to the poor marketing, and with this new policy Leyland will be hoping to deflect some of the heavy criticism it has been receiving recently for its supply problems and indifferent sales record in Japan.

At the same time, however, the policy indicates that Leyland has given up hope for the time being of competing on equal terms with the Japanese in the mass market. From comments by leading importers at the Tokyo Motor Show, which ended yesterday, it appears that no European manufacturer of popular cars is given much chance of a big success in Japan.

The Japanese say that the best hope for European manufacturers is to concentrate on specialist cars, where they can command a high price premium for quality and original style. Prices for European popular cars are too high to be competitive.

Emission laws

Another problem which may also have prompted Leyland's move is the stiffer emission regulations due to be introduced in Japan next year. The Mini, Leyland's main model in the high-volume market, will not meet the standards, which will be the toughest in the world.

As in the U.S., the new Leyland management has apparently decided to concentrate its sales effort on the quality marques rather than incur the heavy expense of bringing the Mini up to standard.

Mr. Sung is strongly in favour of the new policy, although he believes that Shintokyo could be

in danger of losing some of its 77 outlets as volume falls off next year.

The problem is that for some time after the abandonment of the Mini, of which 450 were sold in Japan last year, the distribution network will have to be carried by two Jaguar models—the 4.2 and 5.3 litre vehicles—and the Triumph Spitfire.

The Jaguar and Spitfire models totalled just 338 sales last year, against a little over 900 for Shintokyo, including Minis, and Rovers (which will all be discontinued next year).

In the longer term, Mr. Sung says that Leyland will be discussing the introduction to Japan of its new Rover, due out next year.

He thinks that this could build up a reasonably high volume—BMW, for example, last year sold just over 1,000 units—at a more modest price than the two Jaguar models, which retail at between £14,000 and £16,300. Mr. Sung would also like to begin importing the TR7, which has been sold only in the U.S. so far.

The Leyland strategy falls in line with the views of some other importers, who feel that it is better to attack the Japanese market with higher quality cars than try to meet the local manufacturers head on in the high volume popular sector, where Japanese prices are keenly competitive.

State industries costs probe urged

BY PHILIP RAWSTORNE

MRS. SALLY OPPENHEIM, Conservative spokesman on prices and consumer protection, yesterday called for an urgent inquiry into the costs of nationalised industries.

"The nationalised industries are now the main source of inflation in this country," she told a meeting in her Gloucester constituency. "Urgent action must be taken to safeguard consumer interests."

Accusing the Government of "just adding" with the fringe of the problem, Mrs. Oppenheim suggested that the Price Commission should carry out the initial investigation.

Unjustified costs should be pruned and cash limits imposed, and ways of introducing an element of competition in some sectors should be examined.

Electricity prices had risen by 87 per cent. in less than two years and gas prices by 60 per cent. in under a year, and action was needed before a further series of crushing price increases were imposed on consumers.

"The first question that needs to be answered is why are costs going up so much faster in the nationalised industries than in the private sector?"

"Many people would say they know the answer already—extravagance, waste, inefficiency, back-passing, over-manning and empire building. Certainly these are all practices commonly associated with the nationalised industries."

"It is not necessarily those who run and work in the industries who are to blame—it is the

very nature of the beast that causes its deficiencies. The system stifles personal freedom and bog-ties the industry in a vast web of bureaucracy."

The nationalised industries were the pace-setters for pay increases. "Pay has risen twice as fast in the public sector as in the private sector. Clearly this is an inflationary influence on the whole economy, as is the effect of their huge deficits, on taxes and on the Government's borrowing requirement."

"Private enterprise is not faultless, but at least it has to face the realities of competition and the healthy disciplines of having to live within its means."

Import controls wrong-retailers

By Elinor Goodman

IN AN attempt to fend off import controls, the Retail Consortium produced figures yesterday showing that if all imports of consumer goods were banned tomorrow it would not make a significant difference to the balance of payments.

But the consortium said that a ban would add significantly to the cost of living. The main drain on the balance of payments, the consortium claims, comes not from consumer goods but from imported raw materials and semi-manufactured goods.

Thatcher '50-year setback'

By Philip Rawstorne

THE ELECTION of Mrs. Thatcher as Prime Minister would set the genuine and justified aspirations of working people back 50 years, Mr. Bob Mellish, Government Chief Whip, said yesterday.

He told his Bermondsey constituents that the Tory leader was "giving an up-dated impersonation of the Grand Old Duke of York—she dreams of the days of Imperial grandeur when the troops marched up the hill on a diet of inequality, unequal opportunity, privilege and class distinction."

Mrs. Thatcher had not thought out the effects of her ideology on millions of ordinary people. "What she wants to impose upon us is a society in which a minority of people get as much of the best education, the best jobs, the best homes, the best hospital treatment and the lowest possible taxation on their incomes."

"The well-heeled are approaching the Pearly Gates."

"That sort of policy would have been reactionary in the 19th century. It is quite incredible that any major political party should bring it forward in 1975. It is blatant class war at its worst."

"I say to those Labour voters who are meaning about their Government: 'God help you if you get Margaret Thatcher.' Her policies, if implemented, would bring tears to the eyes of a bullfrog."

Stockbroking firm urges £1.5bn Government cuts

BY MICHAEL BLANDEN

THE GOVERNMENT will have to cut some £1.5bn. in its spending for the next financial year compared with the levels indicated in the Budget this April, the latest review from stockbrokers Phillips and Drew.

The labour force, the firm argues, has been asked to sacrifice its living standards so that inflation can be brought under control. "We are convinced that this effort will be wasted in the medium term unless the Government cuts public spending for the 1976-77 year."

A cut of £1.5bn., the brokers argue, would be a "responsible compromise" to avoid stopping the economic recovery which now appears to be fairly imminent. But the cuts expected to be announced in the new year White Paper on public expenditure fall short of the £3bn. needed to hold the growth of the money supply down to levels in line with the planned reduction in the rate of inflation.

Even with the £1.5bn. reduction in public spending, the brokers foresee that money supply will grow at a rate of 17.45 per cent. through next year. But if the Government tried to hold this down to say 10-12 per cent., the result would be to starve industry of new funds.

The review highlights the complex dilemma facing the Government after a week in which important steps have been taken in the attempt to overcome the country's economic and financial problems. Its conclusions suggest that it may be impossible to reconcile the various objectives of ensuring a recovery in industrial activity and investment and limiting the rise in unemployment, bringing about an improvement in the balance of payment situation and at the same time establishing a permanently lower level of inflation.

Phillips and Drew agree with recent indicators, including last week's CBI survey, that the recession has bottomed out. Their comment: "Although the apparent inability to promote substantial investment growth over the next six months must be seen as a weakness of the recovery, the pick-up appears sufficiently broad-based for us to assume that not only is the worst of the recession over, but that we are on the verge of an upturn in economic activity."

Their concern over the inflationary situation, however, has been heightened by a further revision of the impact of Government spending. The recovery of activity, they argue, is likely to bring a greater financial requirement by companies than suggested by many commentators mainly because of the need to finance stocks.

Moreover, "unless the Government cuts its current estimates for public spending in the 1976 financial year, or permits a rapid acceleration in the money supply, its own borrowing requirement is likely to inhibit recovery by starving the private sector of necessary funds."

Even after a £1.5bn. cut, the review expects the public sector deficit in 1976 to amount to £10.6bn. This will bring further strain on the banking system.

Tax relief call for charities

TAX INCENTIVES to encourage greater individual charitable giving are urged in a report published today by Welsh International Donors Advisory Service.

It says that the lower rate of individual giving as opposed to company giving in Britain, compared with that in the U.S., probably reflects the lack of deductible incentives for British citizens to give personally. Assuming a 20 per cent. rate of inflation, charitable giving will have to expand by a further £76m. a year if charities are to operate on a 1973 scale.

External deficit

The balance of payments problem has been highlighted by the decision to go to the International Monetary Fund for a \$2bn. loan. In spite of the depth of the U.K. economic recession, it is felt to be disappointing that the country's external deficit remains so high.

After an exceptionally good first half, the figures are expected to deteriorate in the second half of the year with the October figures due on Friday providing an important pointer, and with signs at present that the outlook for the year as a whole could be a current deficit of around £1.5bn.

State spending rise 'curbing growth'

BY MICHAEL BLANDEN

THE GROWTH of public spending as a share of the national product cuts investment and the rate of economic growth, says an article in the latest National Westminster Bank quarterly review.

Mr. David Smith, principal research officer in the bank's economic analysis section, concludes that every 5 per cent. increase in the share of national disposable income absorbed by direct State consumption implies a 1 per cent. drop in the country's growth rate.

His analysis will provide further ammunition in the argument over the level of Government spending. It indicates that the growth of Government expenditure is a problem affecting the short-term management of the economy, and the level of inflation and a main factor depressing the long-term performance of the U.K. economy.

Private sector

In the same issue, Dr. David Lomax, the bank's economic adviser, claims that Government intervention and the impact of official economic measures have endangered the private sector of industry and put it "at the mercy of Government."

His comments after last week's moves toward more effective economic planning and co-operation with industry suggest that further official action is needed.

"The present structure of regulation, including particularly

the lack of tax adjustment in relation to the national product, are constraints which, as now implemented, are almost certain to cause the private sector's persistent decline," he says.

If the sector was to play its part, "it is urgently necessary that there be a commitment on the part of Government to do so, and so that people may have some underlying confidence."

Mr. Smith's analysis of State spending reaches two main conclusions. First, "over the long run inflation does not appear to be related to the magnitude of public current expenditure."

Secondly, "the level of gross capital formation does appear to be adversely affected by increased public consumption."

He estimates that in the U.K. "the sustainable medium-term rate of economic growth has fallen by between 0.5 per cent. and just over 1 per cent. since the mid-1950s as a result of the expansion of the public consumption sector."






















"Much of Britain's inflationary crisis may stem from a failure to recognise the extent to which the potential growth rate of the U.K. economy has slowed."

"More fundamentally, the problem stems from the political environment in which policies of all parties have tended to favour a larger State consumption sector, while at the same time concealing the fact that such a large needs to be paid for by a diversion of economic resources from productive ends."

Mr. Lomax, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, is a vice-chairman of the committee. The participation of both Mr. Adamson and Mr. Murray in the committee's June of index-linked Savings Certificates, available to people of national retirement age. Net savings in the first six months of the financial year amounted to £170m., excluding undistributed interest.

Commenting on his appointment, Mr. Adamson said that the National Savings movement was "an effective way of stimulating

HOW FAR CAN YOU GET FOR £1 THESE DAYS?

ANDORRA  4 minutes	AUSTRALIA  57 seconds	BELGIUM  4 minutes	CANADA  1 minute 20 seconds
CYPRUS  2 minutes 12 seconds	DENMARK  2 minutes 50 seconds	FINLAND  2 minutes 50 seconds	FRANCE  4 minutes
GERMANY  2 minutes 50 seconds	GREECE  2 minutes 12 seconds	HONG KONG  57 seconds	ISRAEL  57 seconds
ITALY  2 minutes 50 seconds	LUXEMBOURG  4 minutes	MONACO  4 minutes	NETHERLANDS  4 minutes
NEW ZEALAND  57 seconds	NORWAY  2 minutes 50 seconds	SINGAPORE  57 seconds	SOUTH AFRICA  57 seconds
SPAIN  2 minutes 50 seconds	SWEDEN  2 minutes 50 seconds	SWITZERLAND  2 minutes 50 seconds	U.S.A.  1 minute 20 seconds

You probably know there are some international phone calls you can dial direct.

But do you know just how many countries you can dial direct?

Or how many cities in those countries you can dial direct?

Or, most important of all, how little direct dialling can cost?

HOW MANY COUNTRIES? At the moment, if you're on an exchange with International Dialling—about 60% of telephone users already are, and the list is constantly growing—there are 26 countries you can dial direct.

Alphabetically, they range from Andorra to the U.S.A. Geographically, they stretch round the world. And there are more joining the system all the time.

Cyprus and Finland, for example, will be available within the next few days on November 17th.

HOW MANY CITIES? There is a school of thought that thinks international direct dialling is confined to European capital cities.

Well, Wagga Wagga is a long way from Europe, and is certainly not a capital city, but you can dial straight through from the U.K.

The same is true of Oberammergau in Germany, Skatekors in Denmark, and Fort Worth, Texas.

In most countries, anywhere linked to the automatic network can be dialled.

Which means that literally tens of thousands of places, throughout the length and breadth of Europe and North America, are within your reach.

HOW MUCH? Naturally, the price is going to depend on how far, how long and when you call.

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It's cheaper than you think. Probably a good deal cheaper. Three minutes to Zurich, for example, costs about £1.05.

Two minutes to Hong Kong will set you back £2.10.

New York costs 75p a minute. Or 50p during Cheap Rate. And Wagga Wagga, in the Australian outback? £1.05 a minute. And remember—the shorter the call, the cheaper the cost. If, for example, you can say what you have to say to someone in Brussels in 20 seconds, you'll have change out of 10p.

HOW EASY? Your Telephone Dialling Code Book contains basic information about international direct dialling, including a list of countries which can be dialled, and the dialling codes for the main towns. Which are much the same as inland codes, if a little longer.

If you want a more comprehensive list of dialling codes for a particular country, or details of international charges, we'll be happy to send you one of our special booklets. Just dial 100 and ask for Freeline 2013.

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HOME NEWS

EMI challenged for new X-ray market in U.S.

BY DAVID FISHLOCK, SCIENCE EDITOR

EMI MAY soon face intense competition in the market now opening up for the new X-ray technology it has pioneered.

Three domestic manufacturers in EMI's main market have filed the radiation safety documents required by the U.S. Government regulatory authorities before such instruments can be marketed in the U.S.

EMI recently announced its first orders—worth £4m—from North America for the latest version of its new X-ray instrumentation.

Up to 25 instrument-makers may now be at various stages of studying, designing or building the new X-ray instruments, according to a critique in the U.S. journal, Science.

The instruments—known generically as CAT-scanners (computerised axial tomography)—are being hailed by some radiologists as the greatest advance in medical X-rays since their discovery in 1895.

They are certainly a dramatic example of the value of harnessing a mini-computer to instrument technology.

The great merit of the CAT-scanner is that it can differentiate clearly between tissues that differ very little in density or in X-ray absorption. It does this by X-raying the patient from a large number of angles, rotating the camera round the part of the body under examination.

A mini computer then reconstructs mathematically a three-dimensional image of, for example, a section through the skull or the chest. The reconstructed image can be displayed on a TV-type screen.

The whole process can be carried out rapidly enough to inconvenience the patient very little—an X-ray picture of the heart and lungs can be taken if the patient simply holds his breath for about 20 seconds.

Potential

The Science article acknowledges that EMI, which launched the first of the CAT-scanners—the EMI-Scanner—in 1972, "has been largely responsible for the enthusiasm for CAT-scanners and has inspired the emergence of several competing scanners."

The potential market was very large, with some observers forecasting that within a decade the instrument would appear "nearly everywhere that conventional X-ray machines exist now."

The total sold throughout the world is approaching 500, of which more than 200 are in operation.

CAT-scanners cost on average \$385,000 in the U.S., plus a \$25,000 a year service contract "to keep them operating." The latest body scanners may cost \$550,000 or more.

Land Bill may scrape through

BY JOHN HUNT

THE PROLONGED battle between the Lords and Commons over the Community Land Bill—the measure which empowers local authorities to take over land into public ownership—enters its final stages at Westminster this week.

The controversial legislation has its third reading in the Lords to-day and returns to the Commons to-morrow with about 200 amendments, including 20 important ones.

It goes back to the Lords on Wednesday when it is expected to scrape through and become law on the last day of the present "spill over" session.

The Government will certainly take action in the Commons to remove or tone down the chief Lords amendments. For their part, Conservative peers have no intention of forcing a constitutional crisis by continuing to oppose any such changes.

The Conservatives in the Lords maintain, however, that their stiff opposition and detailed line-by-line scrutiny has been successful in persuading the Government to remove or modify many of the most objectionable features in the Bill.

Lord Sandford, who has led

the Conservative attack together with Baroness Young, declared over the weekend: "Although its major principles remain unchanged there are now more safeguards for individual rights and a much clearer link between the Bill's intentions and the planning framework."

As a result of Opposition pressure the Government has dropped the provision that local authorities need not state the purpose for which they intend to acquire development land—probably the most important concession of all.

It has also agreed that planning permission must be related to relevant development and that the definition of development land is no longer to be left simply to the opinion of local authorities.

Another concession means that the owner of property such as a house, a factory or commercial premises, within a disposal notification area, need not inform the local authority when he intends to dispose of the property provided the recipient is a member of his immediate family.

As a result of a further modification, local authorities

will have to give more information about planned development which could result in them acquiring development land under the terms of the Bill. All Orders designating relevant development will have to be published in local newspapers and made available for inspection at local authority offices.

In addition to the Government's own concessions, there are many important Opposition amendments and these are likely to be contested by the Government.

Some relate to the disposal notification areas which will be established by local authorities and in which owners intending to dispose of property will have to inform the local authority thus giving it the first option to buy the property. An Opposition amendment protects the single dwelling house from this provision.

The list of property which is exempt from the terms of the Bill has also been widened by Tory amendments and, as a result, horticultural land has been exempted.

Another provision of the Bill would have denied a home-owner

the right to a public inquiry against a compulsory purchase order if he had previously had the opportunity of objecting to the terms of the Bill. All Orders designating relevant development will have to be published in local newspapers and made available for inspection at local authority offices.

One of the most bitter battles during the course of the legislation has been the position of churches and charities. They are exempt from the provisions of the Bill for all land held up to September 12, 1974, and were also granted an 11-year respite from the terms of the legislation.

When they are brought within the Bill it would mean any of their land which was acquired by a local authority would be paid for at current use value and not its market value.

An amendment passed by the Bishops of London and Rochester, however, exempted churches and charities from the Bill altogether and later the Tories passed an amendment granting a similar dispensation to pension funds. These amendments are expected to remain the main bones of contention during the final arguments this week.

French magazine names ICI best company in Europe

BY RUPERT CORNWELL

IMPERIAL CHEMICAL INDUSTRIES has become the fourth successive British company to win the annual award by the leading French business magazine L'Expansion for the best all-round performance by a European group last year.

ICI, which narrowly beat Hoechst of Germany for the prize, was described by the magazine as a well-diversified modern and dynamically managed group. Its growth

and profitability were not confined to the chemical boom year of last year, but had been maintained over a long period.

The company follows Guinness, Thorn Electrical, and Courtaulds as L'Expansion's European champions—no mean feat considering that British industry has been mostly losing ground and the country's economy and currency struggling during the period.

There were increasing signs, said the magazine that the paradox might not continue much longer. Britain had hitherto fared well only because investments were kept down and profits artificially swollen by the value of earnings repatriated from strong currency nations.

Last year for the first time Britain was overtaken by France in the number of "medals" given to the three most profitable companies in

each of 14 separate sectors. French companies won 17, British won 14 and only four went to West German groups.

Apart from ICI, six other British contenders found a place in the top 10 most profitable companies—as calculated by L'Expansion's method of measuring profits against capital employed—Beecham, Thorn, Courtaulds, Glaxo, Decca, and RTZ.

PARIS, Nov. 7.

LABOUR NEWS

Lucas workers plan radical strategy

BY LORELIES OLSLAGER, LABOUR STAFF

SHOP STEWARDS in the Lucas Aerospace group this week are considering how to proceed with one of the most ambitious and radical alternative plans drawn up for a company by its workers in recent years.

Technology is, in fact, the only thing that Lucas Aerospace as it is now and a company reformed under the alternative "corporate plan" would have in common, and technology would not be the same either.

Senior stewards on the company's combine committee, which represents about 14,000 blue and white collar workers in the company's 14 factories, set the plan in motion last year when they came to the conclusion that rationalisation in Lucas Aerospace would inevitably mean redundancies, quite apart from the present slump conditions.

Drawing on radical ideas outside the mainstream of present political thought, the committee called for an alternative strategy under which Lucas technology would be used for projects "both socially useful and profitable" and under which traditional production methods would be largely abandoned.

The corporate plan is being kept secret until the committee has decided how to use it—whether as an overall strategy to be discussed with the company and the Government or in a piecemeal fashion each time a plant is threatened with redundancies.

But some of the main proposals have emerged, calling for

the development of aerospace technologies for use in medicine, in pursuit of alternative sources of energy such as wind power, solar energy and fuel cells, and for safer and less polluting transport systems.

In line with a philosophy which advocates directing aerospace technology away from mainly military use, the plan demands a radical reorganisation of work to do away with "dehumanised" fragmented forms of production.

Integrated

The aim would be to break up the hierarchical structure of the workforce and group technicians and blue collar workers together as fully integrated teams.

Such reorganisation, combined with a strong collective bargaining structure, would help to give the workers control over what was being produced and how.

The committee wants Lucas to conclude a planning agreement under which the Government should guarantee the employment of 14,500 people and aim at an expansion of the workforce.

Shop stewards do not claim that implementation of the plan would automatically make Lucas a "capitalist" enterprise. They say that it would still be cheaper for society to keep workers employed on socially useful projects even if they make a slight loss than to keep people on unemployment benefits or social security.

Case of sacked power six may go to Europe court

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

SUPPORTERS of six former employees of a Yorkshire power station who were dismissed for not belonging to a union recently being taken to the European Court of Justice.

The men were dismissed because they do not belong to any of the four unions recognised by the Electricity Council under a closed shop agreement concluded in 1968. The agreement was suspended under the Conservative Industrial Relations Act but the Electricity Council holds that it has come into force again with the repeal of the Act last year.

Three of the six men have also had their unemployment benefit suspended by the local unemployment benefit office.

The ESU claims that the suspension implies that its members are considered guilty of "misconduct," and Mr. Nicholson has written to Mr. Michael Foot, the Secretary of State for Employment, to ask for an urgent reconsideration of the decision.

Mr. Paul Nicholson, general secretary of the Confederation of Employee Organisations, who has

taken up the case of the "Ferry bridge Six," said that in the last resort the fight against dismissal would be taken to the European Court of Justice.

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Jack Jones expects early decision on Chrysler

MR. JACK JONES, general secretary of the Transport and General Workers' Union, expects the Government to decide within the next ten days what kind of assistance it can give Chrysler to continue operations in Britain.

It was probable that a Chrysler delegation would come to the U.K. to learn of the decision, he said.

Mr. Jones plans to write to the United Automobile Workers in the U.S. explaining in detail the British trade union's position that Chrysler ought to continue producing in this country.

This follows an offer of assistance from Mr. Leonard Woolcock, president of the UAW, which Mr. Jones has already accepted in principle in a cable this week-end. In this he asked the American union to use "just best endeavours to influence the Chrysler Board to continue operations in Great Britain. As early statement to this effect would greatly restore the confidence of Chrysler workers in the U.K."

Mr. Jones said yesterday that UAW leaders would meet the Chrysler Board on November 12. But he expected that in the meantime the British Government would have made its decision.

On the assumption that the present £8 limit will be followed by another incomes policy, the unit recommended a special inquiry into farm workers' pay, "taking as its starting point the need to raise the minimum rate for ordinary farm workers to 58p per week in March 1975 terms."

The study accepted that the farming industry would face considerable difficulties in paying such wages at present.

The rise necessary to maintain a skilled labour force in agriculture "must therefore be paid for by the whole population of Britain in the form of slightly higher food prices." To pay for a £50-a-week minimum wage, not seriously expected to hold out for this claim, would mean a 2.5 per cent, it said.

The union's executive meeting last week.

During the executive meeting Mr. Clive Jenkins, the union's general secretary, called for the 1974 White Paper, The Re-introduction of selective import controls and curbs on the export of capital from this country.

Food prices rise 'needed to improve farm wages'

BY LORELIES OLSLAGER

BRITONS should be prepared to accept slightly higher food prices to help improve farm workers' wages, the Low Pay Unit said in a study published to-day.

Without a drastic increase in agricultural wages there would be "a major food crisis, the nature of which this country has not experienced for centuries," because nobody would be willing to work on the land.

The Low Pay Unit recommended that farm workers should receive the full £8-a-week rise allowed under the Government's counter-inflation policy this year. The unions demand £9.50 to bring the minimum wage up to £40 a week but are not seriously expected to hold out for this claim.

On the assumption that the present £8 limit will be followed by another incomes policy, the unit recommended a special inquiry into farm workers' pay, "taking as its starting point the need to raise the minimum rate for ordinary farm workers to 58p per week in March 1975 terms."

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Industrial plan worries union

THE ASSOCIATION of Selenite Technical and Managerial Staff has expressed "substantial concern" at the new industrial strategy considered by the Government and discussed with unions and employers at a meeting last week.

The union's executive said the new approach to industrial strategy was a retreat from the 1974 White Paper, The Re-introduction of selective import controls and curbs on the export of capital from this country.

concern at the Government's decision to seek a "selective" approach to industrial strategy, the union's executive said the new approach to industrial strategy was a retreat from the 1974 White Paper, The Re-introduction of selective import controls and curbs on the export of capital from this country.

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Wage policy 'must end anomalies'

BY OUR LABOUR STAFF

ANY-LONG-TERM policy must do away with "nonsenses" such as supervisors getting less than the people they supervise, according to the general secretary of the 100,000-strong Institution of Professional Civil Servants.

Mr. William McCall writes in

the union's monthly journal that higher paid civil servants want the next stage of incomes policy to protect their interests.

The union has decided what it is to take, but the treatment of increments and differentials "is obviously going to be of great importance," Mr. McCall said.

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OVERSEAS NEWS

New MPLA offensive on eve of independence

BY JANE BERGEROL

LUANDA, Nov. 9.

WITH ONLY 34 hours to go to Angola's independence and the final withdrawal of remaining Portuguese forces and the High Commissioner, the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) is preparing to launch a new offensive against the FNLA and Unita in what is clearly to be a new and fiercer phase of the Angolan war.

Qualitatively and quantitatively, the eight months of fighting between Angola's three rival liberation movements is now being transformed into all-out war with the help of increased supplies of military weapons and manpower from the movements' foreign supporters.

From midnight on Monday night, the taken Portuguese presence will have gone and with it the last impediment to the MPLA bringing in big arms shipments through Luanda's international airport and shipping port. Neither the other two movements, the Zaire-based FNLA and Dr. Jonas Savimbi's weaker Unita, have suffered such impediments over the past months. FNLA has had a free hand to increase its arms supplies across the Zaire border since the end of 1974, while Unita has brought in considerable weapons from Zaire and Zambia over the period from July onwards.

Whether or not to-morrow sees the announcement of three or two rival Angolan Governments, the FNLA/Unita military alliance is sufficiently solid on the ground in central and southern Angola for the war to have effectively turned into a straight battle between two, rather than three, opposing camps.

MPLA is expected to start shipping and airlifting in more weapons from midnight on Monday night, while the FNLA/Unita forces have, since the October 23 joint offensive, shown their hand with use of mercenary armoured columns, using sophisticated Panhard armoured cars and relying on logistical air support enabling them to move at the hitherto unprecedentedly rapid rate of 120 kilometres a day inside Angola, pushing up from the south towards Luanda.

The MPLA military sources said to-day that helicopter gunships had been used by the mercenary column in their capture of Benguela. This is the first time aircraft have been used in strike capacity since the war began last March.

President Idi Amin said to-day Uganda will break off relations with the Soviet Union if he does not receive within 48 hours an explanation from Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev about what the Ugandan head of State called Soviet involvement in Angola.

Editorial comment Page 14
Independence at gun-point Page 30

No Salt deal this year, Ford admits

BY PAUL LEWIS, U.S. EDITOR

WASHINGTON, Nov. 9.

PRESIDENT Ford publicly admitted to-day that there is now no chance of a new Salt agreement on limiting U.S. and Russian nuclear arms this year—or of a summit meeting between himself and Mr. Brezhnev, the Soviet leader.

In an hour-long TV interview with NBC, the American President did not rule out a Salt agreement in the early months of 1976 before the election campaign gets fully underway, but he said that "problems" and "complications" in the negotiations made it unlikely this year.

The same was also true of Mr. Brezhnev's promised summit visit to the U.S. in return for President Nixon's trip to Moscow in the summer of 1974.

The main purpose of such a meeting would be for the two leaders to complete and announce a new arms limitation pact, and until agreement is in sight Mr. Brezhnev is not expected to set a date for his visit.

President Ford's admission to-day is not particularly surprising, since it has been clear for some while that the Salt talks had run into difficulties and the chances of an agreement this year looked slim.

The more important question, however, is whether it will be possible to complete the negotiations before the Ford Administration is engulfed by the election campaign.

President Ford said again to-day that he was in no hurry to get an agreement, and that the important thing was to make sure the U.S. got good terms in

BELGIUM TO INTRODUCE PAY POLICY

By David Curry

BRUSSELS, Nov. 9.

THE BELGIAN Government is planning to introduce an incomes policy for nine months from the New Year.

It is proposing to extend all collective wage agreements expiring before 1976, until the end of September, along with a freeze on rents, dividends and professional fees.

For an experimental one-year period, industry will offer voluntary retirement at the age of 62 to 64 for men and 58 to 59 for women, as a way for making room for young unemployed.

Bangladesh President pledges elections, frees prisoners

BY OUR FOREIGN STAFF

THE NEW Bangladesh regime aims eventually to hand over power to elected representatives, the former Chief Justice Abu Mohammed Sayam, sworn in as President and chief martial law administrator on Saturday, said on Bangladesh Radio, monitored in London, yesterday.

On Saturday the President ordered the release of five political prisoners who had been jailed during the regime of the late President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. They included Major Mohammed Abdul Jalil and Abdur Rab, the president and general secretary of the now-defunct JSD opposition political party.

Daoud Khan Majlis adds from Dacca: There are now definite indications that Brig. Khalid Musharraf's coup was backed by India. The plans were that they would release four leaders of Sheikh Mujib's regime and install two of them as President and Prime Minister and then invoke the Indo-Bangladesh treaty under which, if requested by Bangladesh, India was committed to help meet any threat to Bangladesh's security.

This apparent scheme failed when the four former "lieutenants" of Mujib were brutally murdered inside Dacca goal early last Monday. Having realised that their primary aim had failed, the "putschists" tried to take and maintain power till they could muster enough support among the people.

But the majority of the army Supreme Court verdict upholding anti-Indian, countered and on Friday night the men and

the NCOs almost on their own, took the decisive action to ber 7 as the "glorious Sepoy the NCOs, almost on their revolt". But this has also caused a serious problem for the present regime.

Gen. Ziaur Rahman was installed as Chief of Staff and temporarily as chief martial law administrator. Soldiers and citizens passed slogans on the streets in support of Gen. Ziaur. Dacca street scenes were reminiscent of December 16, 1971, but with the significant difference. While then Indian troops were embraced and garlanded as comrades in arms and liberators on Friday morning the celebrations seemed to be directed against the Indians themselves.

The local Press is now describing the counter-coup of November 7 as the "glorious Sepoy the NCOs, almost on their revolt". But this has also caused a serious problem for the present regime.

Congress in 'unswerving support' for Mrs. Gandhi

BY K. K. SHARMA

NEW DELHI, Nov. 9.

WITH the Supreme Court verdict on Mrs. Indira Gandhi's election case delivered, attention is being given to the timing of elections to Parliament and further changes in the Indian constitution. Decisions on these are expected within a fortnight.

The first concern of the ruling Congress Party appears to be to consolidate the gains of the past four months that the emergency has lasted, culminating in the Supreme Court verdict upholding Mrs. Gandhi's election. Meanwhile, the Congress Parliamentary Party has avoided its "unswerving support" to Mrs. Gandhi's leadership and at a meeting over the week-end it pleaded for continued efforts "to contain the defeat of the forces of destabilisation which are still at work".

An obviously jubilant Mrs. Gandhi spoke of the need for constant vigilance to safeguard stability of the country and referred with passion to the developments in Bangladesh to say that new democracies were based on a delicate balance which had to be carefully nurtured if disaster is to be avoided.

Whitlam, Fraser agree to talks on budget crisis

CANBERRA, Nov. 9.

PRIME Minister Gough Whitlam and opposition leader Malcolm Fraser to-day agreed to meet to discuss Australia's four-week-old constitutional crisis.

The agreement on the meeting between the two men followed an earlier statement by Mr. Whitlam rejecting an offer by Mr. Fraser for talks.

Mr. Fraser's Liberal Party and the allied National Country Party have used their Senate majority

funds, will start to run out later this month.

The opposition wants a general election, more than a year before the present Government's three-year term of office expires.

Mr. Whitlam had earlier rejected an invitation by Mr. Fraser to hold talks on the crisis. Mr. Fraser said in a statement that opposition leaders were willing to meet Mr. Whitlam immediately to end the deadlock, but a spokesman for the Prime Minister described this as "not an offer at all".

In a nationwide television address, Mr. Whitlam called on Australians to stand firm together to force the opposition majority in the Senate to pass his Government's August budget.

Without the money appropriated in the budget Bill, the Government is rapidly running out of funds to meet its financial obligations.

More Foreign News on Page 11

block the Labour Government's budget Bills in an attempt to force an early general election. Both men have declared they would hold firm to their opposing positions. They are due to meet in private on Tuesday. Unless agreement is reached, the Government's supply of

Army arrests 1,300 in Argentine guerilla sweep

BUENOS AIRES, Nov. 9.

MORE THAN 1,300 people were arrested in Argentina overnight in operations connected with the army's stepped-up campaign against left-wing guerrillas, official sources said here to-day.

The "spreading" Army-guerilla war also left six guerrillas and soldiers dead after a battle in northern Tucuman province, he sources said about 1,300 people were arrested in the eastern city of Mendoza, 700 miles from here, when police and soldiers raided homes of suspected guerrillas in the industrial city of Rosario, 200 miles north of here, on Saturday. Another opposition group, the Progressive Democratic Party, said yesterday the President should resign.

Lebanese arms round-up

BY HSAN HIJAZI

BEIRUT, Nov. 9.

WITH THE Lebanese ceasefire apparently holding, new efforts by Premier Rashid Karami have begun to try to disarm the vilian population.

Mr. Karami declared in a statement yesterday that arms could be collected if stability is to continue. He announced that he was now working on an action which would seek to reorganise the army and internal security forces in an effort to strengthen the authority of the State.

The Premier began his new drive after a shipment of weapons was delivered two days ago at the predominantly Christian port of Jounieh a few miles north of here. Mr. Karami is expected to submit his new ideas at the

regular session of the Cabinet under President Suleiman Frangieh on Wednesday.

From Rome, Dominick J. Coyle reports that concerted campaign by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) for wider diplomatic recognition internationally, has been further advanced by its success in securing observer status at the UN Food and Agricultural Organisation's governing conference, despite strongly-voiced Israeli and American opposition.

Cardinal Paolo Bertoli, special envoy of Pope Paul, arrived in Beirut to stress Vatican opposition to any division of Lebanon between Christians and Moslems as a means of ending the country's months of civil strife.

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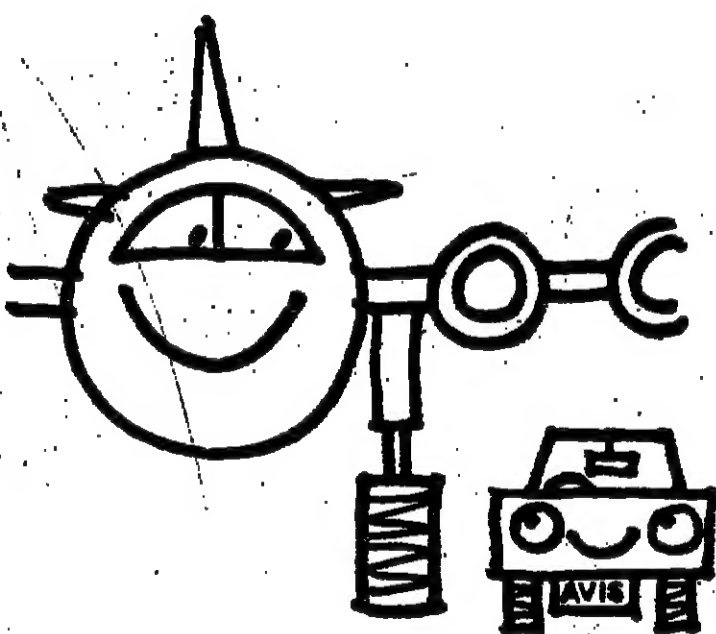


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GDR Engineering Week in Great Britain

10th—14th November, 1975 in London

Good prospects for more intensive Trade between the German Democratic Republic and the United Kingdom

The 15th December marks the second anniversary of the signing, by the governments of the German Democratic Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of the long-term agreement on economic, industrial and scientific co-operation. This anniversary coincides with the second meeting of the joint government commission being held in Berlin, to discuss ways and means of providing a further stimulus to trade and technical and scientific cooperation between the two countries, for which the GDR considers the present circumstances to be extremely favourable.

The GDR and the United Kingdom established diplomatic relations before the signing of the agreement at government level. This event in February 1973 laid sound foundations for long-term trade links and resulted in a substantial rise in export sales as early as 1974. The generally closer links which are now being established between all European countries will obviously facilitate a further and substantial expansion in mutually beneficial two-way trade. The economic structure and potential of both countries offer possibilities for further such rates of growth in trade between them. In 1974, shortly after the recognition of the GDR as an independent state by the capitalist industrialised countries, trade with these countries rose by 30%. The countries where increase was greatest within the extraordinarily high rate of growth were Belgium, Sweden, the Netherlands, the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom.

One of the chief factors contributing towards a further increase in trade with the capitalist industrialised countries is the considerable potential and dynamism of the economy of the GDR. In October 1975, the GDR ranked tenth in the world — in terms of gross industrial production. Its expected



The British Ambassador in the GDR, Mr. H. B. C. Keeble (r.), greets the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) Erich Honecker (2nd from l.), the Chairman of the Council of State Willi Stoph (3rd from l.), the GDR Prime Minister Horst Sindermann (extreme l.) and other members of Party and State leadership of the GDR during their visit to the British Exhibition at the 1975 Leipzig Autumn Fair.

national income figure for 1975 assures it seventh place in Europe, while the GDR ranks even higher in the production of a number of selected products.

The potential of the GDR is based on the country's cooperation with the other partners in Comecon and in particular with the USSR. Sixty-nine per cent of the GDR's total exports between 1971 and 1974 went to Comecon countries. This figure reflects a high level of international specialisation and division of labour which enables each country individually to concentrate its scientific and technical resources on selected areas in order to achieve optimum results. One example of this policy in action is the high standard achieved by the GDR machine tool industry, which over the last ten years has exported 50,000 machines to the

capitalist industrialised countries — a figure requiring no further comment. The U.K. companies which use GDR machine tools to increase their productivity include Guest Keen & Nettlefolds, Ford and David Brown. Other important exports to Britain from the GDR include wire rope-making machines, textile machinery, scientific instruments, electrical and electronic products, metallurgical products, chemicals and consumer goods such as cameras, domestic and camping equipment, furniture, toys and musical instruments and potash. The GDR sees genuine possibilities of expanding exports and of increasing the share of products from the metal-working industry over the next few years.

The smooth, dynamic growth of the GDR's economy naturally encourages its western trading partners to look for increased exports to that country, and the

United Kingdom is among them. Hitherto the main goods imported from the United Kingdom by the GDR have been chemical products, machine tools, textile machinery and other specialised machinery and equipment, as well as textiles and luxury foodstuffs. The preparation of the new Five Year Plan, which will cover the period 1976 to 1980, will give many companies the opportunity to increase sales to the GDR and many British firms

will be interested in the GDR's need for a range of items of capital equipment which is considerable by international standards.

Intensive negotiations have for some time been under way on the extension of trade links, co-operation in business with other countries and the development of scientific and technical co-operation—as is evidenced by the British attendance at the Leipzig Fairs in Spring and Autumn, which was greater than ever before and the exchange of trade delegations. Discussions to date show that the commercial links between the GDR and the United Kingdom are gradually increasing and that there is considerable potential for further expansion. Further evidence is to be found in the agreements between GDR foreign trade organisations and important capitalist firms which have recently been concluded. Such agreements for more intensive cooperation exist between the GDR's Chemie-Export-Import organisation and ICI Ltd., and also with Shell. An agreement has also been signed between Guest Keen & Nettlefolds and a consortium of GDR foreign trade organisations. Here, too, there is great scope for the development of trading relations between the GDR and the United Kingdom to the benefit of both countries. The GDR is keen to see this happen.

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Latest Achievements in GDR Engineering to be seen in London

The Chamber of Foreign Trade of the GDR and the London Chamber of Commerce are conducting a GDR Engineering Week in Great Britain from November 10th to 14th. The aim is to promote the exchange of views and experience between engineering experts of the two countries, thus contributing to an expansion of trade between them.

In the course of the week more than 20 engineering experts and technicians from the GDR will give 30 lectures on scientific and technical problems and ways to solve them. Subjects will range from machine tools, textile machinery and printing machinery engineering to electro-technology and electronics, precision instrument construction and the building industry.

Well-known experts, design engineers and other specialists from internationally known factories and research institutes of the GDR will speak; they will represent Carl Zeiss Jena, the Professor Manfred von Ardenne

Institute in Dresden, the Research Institute for Textile Technology in Karl-Marx-Stadt, the Metal-Forming Technology group of works in Erfurt, the "Polygraph" printing works in Leipzig, the machine tool engineering works in Berlin and Karl-Marx-Stadt and the GDR Building Academy. Representatives of a number of other engineering enterprises, including the Thuringian electro-motor works, the locomotive and electro-technical works in Hennigsdorf and the plastics machine works in Freital, will also be present.

The Engineering Week is one of the many activities resulting from the long-term government-level agreement on economic, industrial and scientific-technical co-operation signed between the two countries in December, 1973. It is part of the working programme of the joint GDR-Great Britain Government commission. Experience gained since the agreement indicates that a new phase in economic relations has commenced. Co-operation has de-

veloped rapidly within the scope of potentialities of the two countries and the complementary nature of the two economic structures.

The GDR exports to Great Britain products of the engineering industry and electro-technology and electronics, products of the chemical industry, consumer goods and potash. It imports from Great Britain machines and equipment, chemical products, textile raw materials and products and luxury goods. These are the products which have constituted the main British exhibits at the Leipzig Fair so far.

The GDR's exports have a good reputation in Great Britain. The Ford works in Dagenham, for example, import gear-box parts from a transversal laminating machine works in Erfurt for their Cortina, Escort and Capri cars. Vickers Ltd., the heavy engineering and ship-building firm, have also installed a considerable number of GDR machine tools in their works in the past few

years. These include Niles Type DLZ 400/IV centre lathes. Another interesting example, is the signing of a long-term contract some time ago between the GDR Chemie-Export-Import firm and ICI. This was the result of many years of good co-operation between the two firms and opened up new possibilities. While ICI now delivers an increased quantity of dyestuffs, plant protectives and pesticides and other products to the GDR, British imports of GDR chemical products are increasing. Similar contracts were signed between the appropriate GDR foreign trade firms and Guest Keen Nettlefolds and Shell.

In spring this year a delegation of the Confederation of British Industries (CBI) headed by Lord Layton, Vice-Chairman of the Board of Directors of the British Steel Corporation, visited Berlin. During the visit, negotiations were conducted with top representatives of GDR foreign trade and industry. All the talks revealed that there were favour-

able opportunities for a rapid build-up of economic relations between the GDR and Great Britain. Lord Layton and other leading British industrialists also had the opportunity to meet GDR Prime Minister Horst Sindermann, who stressed the importance attached by the GDR to a further expansion of bilateral economic relations on a basis of equality. Lord Layton pointed out that many British industrialists were greatly interested in expanding economic relations with the GDR. The experience of the institutions and firms involved in this bilateral trade justifies the statement that a knowledge of both sides of the economic, scientific and technical potential of the other country is an important condition for an expansion of economic relations.

The Engineering Week is intended to satisfy the desire of British engineering circles for more information and also to find suitable ways for more fruitful co-operation both in technical and in new fields.



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"GDR Engineering Week in Great Britain" 10th-14th November 1975

ALL EVENTS TAKE PLACE AT THE LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, 58 CANNON STREET

Monday, 10/11/75		(Wed. 12/11/75 cont.)	
10.30	Speaker Dipl. Ing. F. Reinhardt Dr. N. Pauligk	10.30	Speaker Dipl. Ing. H. Schoeler
10.30	Subject Sheet-fed offset in the GDR	10.30	Subject Photogrammetric measurement and its applications in industry
	Use of the service duct system in new building developments	13.30	Dipl. Ing. E. Beschmitt
	a) Machine system for erection of roofing segments	13.30	Dipl. Ing. H. Schoeler
	b) System for reconditioning water supply piping	15.30	Prof. Dr. Ing. K. Pestel
10.30	Dr. G. Krahnert	15.30	Dipl. Ing. H. Schoeler
	Knives for machine tools, machining centres and machining systems for processing prismatic parts	15.30	Dr. Lehnhardt
13.30	Dipl. Ing. H. Kraeker	10.30	Dipl. Phys. F. Doeppel
13.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Philipp	10.30	Dipl. Ing. K. Schmidt
	Web offset machines from the GDR	13.30	Dipl. Ing. G. Edelmann
13.30	Dipl. Ing. oec. J. Roller	13.30	Dipl. Ing. C. Huether
15.30	Dipl. Ing. P. Reinhardt	13.30	Dr. H. Foerster
	Economic boring with numerically controlled jig boring machines	15.30	Dipl. Ing. D. Erth
15.30	Dr. Dr. Döring	15.30	Dipl. Ing. G. Huether
15.30	Dipl. Ing. D. Rietzel	15.30	Dipl. Ing. R. Holle
	Thread sealing — new possibilities for substantially increasing productivity in book-binding	Friday, 14/11/75	
15.30	Dr. Dr. Döring	10.30	Prof. Dr. Ing. K. Pestel
15.30	Dipl. Ing. D. Rietzel	10.30	Dipl. Ing. H. Krumbiegel
	Thermal treatment of reinforcing steel	10.30	Ing. H. Hoffmeyer
15.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Weizel		
15.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Jahn		
Wednesday, 12/11/75			
10.30	Prof. Dr. Ing. K. Pestel		
	Further development of two-column presses and the rational production of sheet-metal formed parts		
13.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Weizel		
15.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Jahn		
	Manufacturing process for whirling coil sheets for heat exchangers		
15.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Jahn		
	Rationalisation of twist drill production		
15.30	Dipl. Ing. W. Jahn		
	The technical and economic situation efficiency of the GDR textile machinery industry		



Economic Growth furthers the Comprehensive Social Programme

The 15th plenary session of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party (SED) was able to present a favourable balance early in October in Berlin. Consumer goods prices have again remained stable this year, real wages have continued to rise and there will be jobs for all in the future, too.

People here rightly rely on the fact that social security for the working people is a central aim of government policy. The 8th Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party stressed in 1971 that "We have only one aim which runs through the entire policy of our party, and that is to do our utmost for the welfare and happiness of the people and for the interests of the working class and all working people." This was the fundamental aim of the current Five-Year Plan.

The fact that the socialist state guides the social processes is also the reason for stable prices of foodstuffs and industrial goods, maintenance and repair services and transport. The government allocated over fifty thousand million marks in subsidies between 1971 and 1975. Today, a family paying 100 marks for food in Berlin, Leipzig or Dresden actually gets goods to the value of 125.90 marks. A mother buying a pair of shoes for a child pays an average 33 marks less than the shoes are worth. There is a government subsidy of 1.37 marks on a 1 mark ticket on a public conveyance. At the same time, net income has increased by an average 5 per cent. each year—an increase of 1 per cent. per year above what was expected under the Five-Year Plan. These are results of which

people in the GDR can be proud. They are clear evidence of the close inter-relationships between economic and social policy, fully in accord with the main aim in home policy formulated in the Five-Year Plan, that is, to satisfy the growing needs of the population through increasing the efficiency of nationally owned industry.

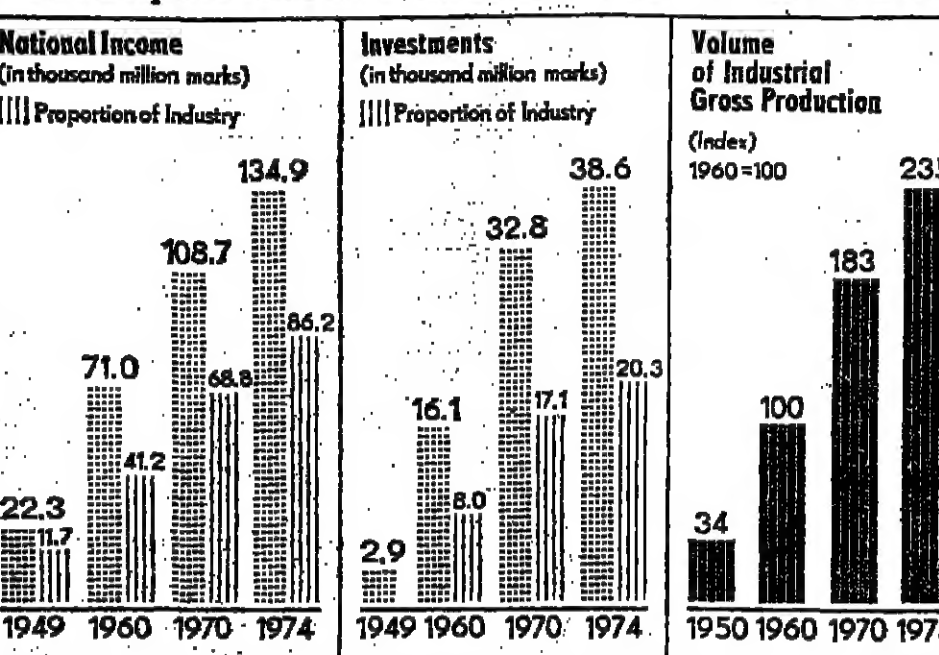
The 15th plenary session of the SED was also able to report that the GDR will implement the plan begun in 1971 and exceed this in some fields. The national income, which was 108 thousand million marks in 1970, will probably be in the region of 140 thousand million marks at the end of this year, which places the GDR seventh among the European countries in this respect. In terms of gross industrial production, the GDR ranks tenth

in the world; per capita production is about four times higher than the world average. On these healthy foundations the GDR is successfully carrying out the programme decided upon in 1971, the broadest socio-political programme since its foundation. It has resulted in better housing for every tenth citizen, for example. Since 1971 the Government has spent about 19.3 thousand million marks on a generous housing programme which is regarded as the nucleus of the socio-political programme. The housing problem—one of the worst consequences of war and capitalist mismanagement—is to be completely solved by 1980, when about half the housing will be new. Freed from speculation in land values and rents, the workers are the main beneficiaries of this project. They get about 60 per cent. of the new accommodation, the rents for which represent only about one-third of actual costs, two-thirds being borne by the state. In general, not more than four to seven per cent. of the family income goes in rent in the GDR, and this has also been stable for many years.

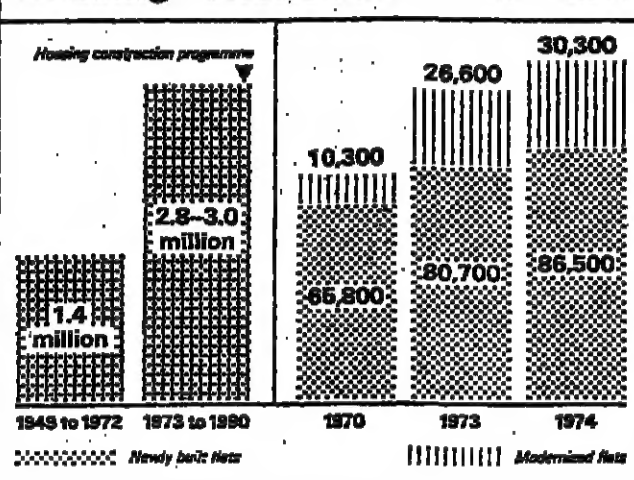
The results of this socio-political programme can also be clearly seen in wage increases for 2.2 million workers and longer holidays for 1.5 million. Old-age pensions have increased by 25 per cent. since 1970. Young married couples, working mothers and large families receive generous assistance. The aims set forth in the Five-Year Plan for the step-by-step introduction of universal ten-year polytechnical secondary education have been achieved. Nine per cent. of all school-leavers learn a trade, and the universities are open to all talented young people.

All these things are not, of course, a "gift" to the people by the government. They are the result of hard work, and many things are still not available in adequate quantities. But—and this is regarded as an essential characteristic of socialism in the GDR—the results of work benefit both the individual and society as a whole. Social security is not an empty phrase; no one need fear for the future.

Development of the Industrial Basis of the GDR



Housing construction in the GDR



CMEA: Co-ordination of Plans up to 1980

To-day whenever there is talk of trade and economic relations between Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, the GDR, Hungary, Rumania, the Mongolian People's Republic, Rumania and the USSR, the Council for Mutual Economic Aid (CMEA, Comecon), to which these nine countries of Europe, Asia and Latin America belong, must also be mentioned. The first international socialist economic organisation, founded in 1949, has proved to be a stable and dynamic economic region.

In the Council's first 25 years of steady economic growth, the industrial production of its member states has increased more than 12-fold, their national incomes eight-fold. This dynamic economic development has contributed to a shifting of proportions in the world economic situation. While the CMEA countries had a share of just 18 per cent. of world industrial production in 1950, its share is now 34 per cent., with a share in territory of 18.5 per cent. and in world population of 35 per cent. These figures highlight the economic development in all what the UN stated in its Statistical Yearbook 1988: "The tempo of development of the productive forces in the socialist countries is quite clearly higher and, from a long-term point of view, it is also stable. This is without doubt connected with the social character of socialism."

That is in fact the decisive reason. The ever-increasing co-operation within CMEA stands at rapid development of the national economy of each country and of the community as a whole; it combines national and international interests in raising the material and cultural standards of the people in a step-by-step levelling-up of economic development in all its member countries. While in 1980, for example, the difference in income per head of the population between the most highly developed and the least developed CMEA country was 400 per cent., it was only 250 per cent. ten years later (and the total national incomes of the CMEA countries increased 5.7-fold over the same period). This was achieved primarily through mutual assistance among the member countries—especially on the part of the Soviet Union—and through an international division of labour.

The GDR's successful development among the ten leading industrial nations of the world is also closely linked with co-operation within CMEA. For example, no large investment project in the GDR has got under way without economic co-operation with the other CMEA countries. Or to take another example: the GDR can always rely on the considerable potential of the entire socialist economic region in making use of its supplies of raw materials and energy. If the governments of the CMEA countries were in position to state in summer 1975 in Budapest that a steady supply of raw materials and fuel was assured for the period from 1976 to 1980, then this—in view of the international situation in this field—can be regarded as basic evidence of the potential of CMEA.

The key to its effectiveness lies in long-term planning of co-operation. A new phase in integration is now being introduced with the co-ordination of national economic plans for the coming five years. Binding contracts entered into voluntarily and deliberately, lay down who is to produce what for whom, that is, how international divisions of labour can be organised more rationally through specialisation and co-operation.

In this new phase it is a question of utilising the great potential of science and technology more quickly and with co-operation, and of determining how best the material and financial strength of the member countries can be combined for the purpose of setting up large projects useful for all. For example, agreement has been reached on building a number of efficient production centres on the most suitable sites—for cellulose, asbestos, mineral oil, ferro-alloys, nickel and other important products. In the coming years the total expenditure on such joint projects will be in the region of 9,000 million transferable roubles. Increasing advantage will be taken of socialist economic integration for the purpose of an all-round strengthening of the CMEA countries.

At the same time the scope of international co-operation outside the framework of CMEA is widening. As a result of their stable economic growth, the CMEA countries can also offer attractive prospects for bilateral trade and for advantageous long-term contracts with capitalist countries.

WMW — Symbol of Quality and Efficiency

Machine tool engineering and toolmaking are among the leading industries of the GDR. The GDR ranks 8th in terms of machine tool production and 4th in terms of machine tool exports in the world. Sixty nationally-owned factories amalgamated into five combines employ more than 70,000 workers, engineers and scientists.

The world-famous WMW quality production has been expanded by decades of experience, high qualification and creative initiatives of WMW people as well as close contacts with its customers. Results achieved from cooperation within the Council for Mutual Economic Aid have also been very profitable to the industry. The machine tool industries of the socialist countries united in the CMEA are becoming more and more integrated. The result is the rationalization of the development and production potential which proves beneficial also to our trade partners throughout the world.

The WMW products including quite a number of numerically controlled machines are in line with the international trend in machine tool engineering. This was also found to be the case with comparisons on an international level. During the last 12 years WMW products alone have been awarded 104 medals and diplomas at fairs and exhibitions which testify to the high quality of these products.

At present more than 50 types of numerically controlled production equipment are being built in the GDR. The machine tools are designed so as to permit foreign control systems to be fitted. About 50 per cent. of the NC machines produced are being exported with the percentage of special-purpose machines tailored to the customers' increasing requirements. During the past 20 years more than 200,000 machine tools have been exported by the GDR.

The customers abroad benefit from the fact that all questions of supply are dealt with by one agency only: the nationally owned trading organization WMW-Export-Import, backed by technical and commercial offices established by WMW in more than 30 countries including Great Britain. A well organized, dense network of agencies in more than 30 countries as well as a large service staff are at the customers' disposal. The British metalworking industry has been buying GDR

machine tools for years. Regular customers of WMW include companies such as GKN, Sykes, Maritz, Wickman, Ford Dagenham, British Steel Corporation and Modern Wheel Drive. A significant number of lathes, boring mills imported by Great internal and external grinders, Britain comes from the surface grinders, gear cutting VEB Werkzeugmaschinenkombinat machines, shears, presses and binot "Fritz Heckert" Karl-profile rolling machines etc. is Marx-Stadt.

Again this year, the nationally owned trading organization WMW-Export-Import will show top products of science and technology at international fairs and exhibitions in 20 countries. Prospects are bright for the further development and organization of the trade relations with Great Britain for the mutual benefit of both countries.

TEXTIMA



PROJECTS
TECHNOLOGICAL
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for the textile
and clothing industries
from fibres up to
ready-made clothes

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Aussenhandels-gesellschaft mbH
DDR-106 Berlin, Mohrenstrasse 53/54
German Democratic Republic

Full information from
92/97 New Cavendish Street, London, W1A 2AR
Tel: 323 4661 Telex: 27337 hanverlon

Written and Sponsored by Interwerbung and
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Machine Tools from the GDR

WMW for efficient and economical manufacture

Get to know WMW
Consult WMW

Turning - Grinding - Gear cutting
VEB
Werkzeugmaschinenkombinat
"F. Oktober", Berlin.
Milling - Drilling - Planing
VEB
Werkzeugmaschinenkombinat
"Fritz Heckert",
Karl-Marx-Stadt.
VEB Uhren-
und Maschinenkombinat
Ruhla.

Sheet metal working plate
and solid forming
VEB Kombinat Umformtechnik
Erfurt.
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VEB Werkzeugkombinat
Schmalldalen.



WMW - export - import
Volkseigener
Aussenhandelsbetrieb
der Deutschen Demokratischen
Republik
GDR - 104 Berlin,
Chausseestrasse 111.

Our representatives in London:
VEMEX LTD
93-97 New Cavendish Street
London W1A 2AR
Tel: 323 4661 Telex: 27337 Hanverlon

Medium term economic forecasting in conditions of uncertainty

A one day conference will be held at—
The Royal Society 6 Carlton House Terrace SW1
27th November 1975

Organised jointly by the
National Economic Development Office and
Society for Long Range Planning

The role of forecasting is not always clear. Is it to predict what will happen or to stimulate what might happen given certain assumptions? Is it to define the choices to be made or to help us choose between alternative courses of action? The answers to these questions depend both on the degree of uncertainty and on how far we desire to change existing trends.

At present in the UK we face a baffling range of choices about the action we must take to improve our prospects. What is the relevance of forecasting in this situation; how can it be used and how should we read the forecaster's efforts.

That is what this conference is about.

The programme will be in four sessions:

FIRST SESSION: Introductory

An introductory keynote paper. The state of the art, relevance to current conditions, relationship of forecasting and planning; need to integrate the two; international experience and use of forecasting.

SECOND SESSION: A Government view

Government use of medium term forecasting. Philosophy of forecasting for the guidance of policy; the current attitudes to forecasting as an aid to strategy; exogenous assumptions now being used; future intentions on method, use and accessibility to others.

THIRD SESSION: Industrial views

Importance, uses and assumptions of forecasting. What does industry expect of forecasts? What does it require of them?

How important is agreement on results?

How important is agreement on assumptions?

How can Government, NEDO and others help?

a) From the point of view of an industrial forecaster.

b) From the point of view of industrial users of forecasts.

FOURTH SESSION: Summary and panel discussion

The Summary will be a central feature, given by the chairman of this last session. He will bring together economic, official and industrial views and suggest a synthesis.

The Panel will discuss the chairman's statement and contributions from the floor.

APPLICATION FORM (block capitals please)

MEDIUM TERM ECONOMIC FORECASTING
IN CONDITIONS OF UNCERTAINTY

27th November 1975 at The Royal Society, 6 Carlton House Terrace SW1

FEES: £35.00 plus £2.80 VAT

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Venezuela drops its backing for Guatemala

By Hugh O'Shaughnessy

CARACAS, Nov. 9.

SENOR Carlos Andres Perez, the

Venezuelan president, withdrew

support for Guatemala's claim

to Belize, in a dramatic move last

night, which will greatly

strengthen the territory's diplomatic

position in Latin America and

its claim to self-determination.

Speaking at a Press conference

for visiting journalists, the leader

of Latin America's richest

country said that for historical

reasons Venezuela had always

supported Guatemala's claim to

sovereignty over Belize and was

opposed to the continuance of

"colonial situations in the western

hemisphere."

Nevertheless, Venezuela was

now changing its position, he

said. President Perez explained

that one could not overlook the

fact that the customs, language

and way of life of Belize were

different from those of Guate-

mala, though he went on to

blame "sordid colonialism" for

having promoted "a situation

under which the inhabitants of

the colony had been taught to

live, "with their backs turned to

their neighbours."

As a result, he announced,

Venezuela had decided that the

Belize situation could best be

solved by the UN.

Guyana, too

Our Georgetown correspondent

adds that the Guyana Govern-

ment has pledged its support

to the people of Belize in their

struggle for self-determination.

Prime Minister Forbes Burnham

has issued statements describ-

ing the Guatemalan military

moves against Belize as a threat,

not only against the Belizean

people, but "calculated to erode

the solidarity of the region at a

time when all of its efforts

should be directed to the task

of social and economic recon-

struction."

From Belize, Reuter reports

that week-end shoppers on both

sides of the Belize-Guatemalan

border crossed the frontier as

normal, and there was little sign

of the tension that prompted

Britain to fly in troop reinforce-

ments.

Unity teams

set up in

Vietnam

HONG KONG, Nov. 9.

NORTH AND South Vietnam

have set up delegations to

negotiate the reunification of

the two countries, Hanoi Radio

announced today.

In a broadcast monitored here,

the radio said the two sides

would discuss general elections

throughout Vietnam, either side

of the 17th parallel, the divid-

ing line laid down in the 1954

Geneva peace talks.

The two delegations would also

discuss the setting up of a

National Assembly as well as

"common state organs" for a

reunited Vietnam.

Hanoi Radio said the South

decided to appoint a delegation

at a conference held on Novem-

ber 6 and 7 by various bodies,

including the National Libera-

tion Front (NLF), and the

Provisional Revolutionary

Government (PRG).

The radio said the meeting in

Hanoi which decided to set up

a negotiating team heard a

report from North Vietnamese

Prime Minister Pham Van

Dong on policy for reunification.

It said the report dealt with

creating conditions "for rapidly

completing the reunification of

the fatherland and advancing

the entire country towards

socialism in accordance with our

compatriots' earnest aspirations.

Observers in the South Viet-

namese capital, Saigon, ex-

pected the reunification to be

announced next year.

Reuter

More ships in

Israel via

Suez Canal

ASHDOD, Nov. 9.

TWO more ships arrived in

Israeli ports today after pass-

ing through the Suez Canal

under the terms of the Septem-

ber Israel-Egypt interim peace

agreement.

They are the 6,000-ton

Liberian Sea Bird and the 6,089-

ton British refrigerated vessel

Van Dee, both of which made

the northward passage to Ashdod

in ballast.

The Sea Bird is to load metal

pipes before sailing back

through the canal to Iran.

Only one vessel has so far

made the trip with cargo for

Israel—the Greek freighter

Olympus.

Reuter

FLOOR PRICE

FOR BAUXITE

SUGGESTED

By Canute James

THE Ministerial Council of the

International Bauxite Association

has recommended to its 11 mem-

bers that they implement a mini-

mum pricing policy to cover all

bauxite exported next year.

The recommendation came at

the end of a five-day meeting

at the association's headquarters

here at which the question was

the main item.

No figures were released by

the IBA, but a communiqué

issued yesterday morning indi-

cated that the prices would be

determined by the standard and

the grade of ore produced by

members' countries.

The fact that a price issue got

through the conference as a

recommendation, rather than as

a resolution, does not make it

binding on all countries.

FOREIGN INVESTMENT AFTER THE HERREMA AFFAIR

Eire's Achilles heel

BY GILES MERRITT, DUBLIN CORRESPONDENT

BY accident, or design, Dr.

Herrema's kidnappers found the

Irish Government's Achilles heel.

—foreign investment. An area so

sensitive that they seriously mis-

calculated the authorities' re-

action. Foreign-owned industry

has in recent years become so

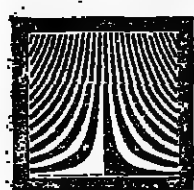
crucial to the Irish economy that

its continued growth might have

been jeopardised by a soft

approach to the Herrema case.

To give in to the kidnap gang's



The Technical Page

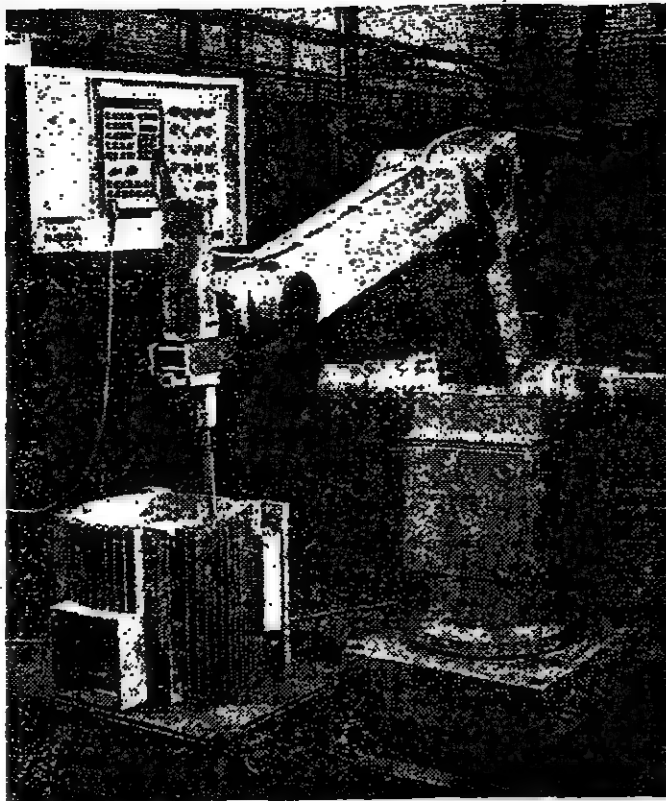
EDITED BY ARTHUR BENNETT AND TED SCHOETERS

AUTOMATION

Robots to do work nobody wants

ROBOTS have, rightly or that it! Accuracy is all that could possibly be needed since 0.2mm repeatability can be achieved. Initially the idea was to handle market survey specialists—impossible for humans because of the hostile environment. But with its rapidly growing anticipated that the originators themselves are a little stumped. It is not surprising, therefore, that ASEA is in the forefront of robot development. In many cases, ASEA's manufacturing division has already succeeded in building equipment with characteristics that make it easier to use than the handful of competitors' products.

Outstanding among these characteristics are simplicity, ruggedness and ease with which the robots can be taught what it is they are expected to do. Additionally, the electronic controller is compact—so compact that it can be put at the end of a long cable. This is an advantage that the robot itself can be placed in environments with an ambient temperature of 70deg.C., or higher still, provided that the lubricant in the robot's wrist and fingers can stand up to it.



ASEA's smaller robot set up to deburr automatically a complex casting for a motor casing.

Programming the unit to do a job is touchingly like taking a small child through the motions of a job. The programmer takes the control board to the operating and moves the robot in the sequence of steps. The robot's arm to each position in a sequence, pressing the appropriate keys as needed. There is very little more than

gramme and without fatigue, two shifts a day. Control of the movement of the robot, which can have up to six axes of rotation, is through a logic unit mounted in a panel about 2 inches through by 15 by 9 inches. In the brain of this small computer on a chip is mounted to accept and validate all the instructions. Validation is important in that it will not allow a human programmer to tell the machine to make movements which are either impossible, or dangerous, since they

would involve collision with other objects in the immediate surroundings. The controller takes feedback from the controlled objects. The same unit is now being used by ASEA as the pivot of its advanced machine tool controllers. It is so compact that it can be mounted in the shield of a miller or lathe, needing no separate cabinet for the electronics.

ASEA is at Villiers House, 41, Strand, London, W.C.2 (01-930 5411).

COMMUNICATIONS

Clearer image

FURTHER improvement in resolution of earlier models has been achieved in a third generation charge-coupled device (CCD) television camera to be made available by Fairchild. Camera and instrument at the turn of the year.

AN-201 miniature camera has 224 line resolution and a bandwidth of 1.85 MHz compared with a resolution of 100 lines and 1.0 MHz bandwidth in the Fairchild AN-101. Its immediate predecessor, the new sensor contains

POWER

Hydraulic motors

A RANGE of small, light hydraulic motors has been introduced from Germany by Linde Hydraulics, Arnhem Road, Newbury, Berks.

Of the bent axis type, in which the angle of the cylinder barrel relative to the drive changes to produce variations in piston stroke (and therefore torque), this series has a sliding block guide to change the angle. This

improves the porting and can be used at higher motor speeds, as well as reducing the motor size and weight.

Called the B Series, there are two basic types in the range. The BMR remains in minimum displacement for high speed, but moves automatically under high torque demands to maximum displacement (piston stroke). The BMV has three variable displacement options of 50, 75 and 100 cc per revolution, and a control port to change the displacement position.

Working pressure is from 0.6,000 psi and the speed range is up to 4,600 rpm.

TEXTILES

Handling a difficult fabric

IN RECENT years there has been a tendency in the weaving trade to turn to looms that operate from continuous supplies of weft yarn rather than use the classical flying shuttle. Such looms are being built in a variety of forms such as the flexible and rigid rapier types, gripper shuttles, air and water jets, and more recently, the multiple carriers that travel across the loom in a wavelike motion.

INSTRUMENTS

Radio assay for clinical medicine

PYE UNICAM has introduced a Philips liquid scintillation analyser for the radio assay of biological and other materials labelled with carbon 14, tritium and other beta-isotopes. It is said to be particularly suitable for use in biochemistry and clinical medicine.

The sample changer system enables loading of 300 samples in 30 trays of ten vials each, cutting loading time to a minimum and eliminating the hazard of misplaced samples. This enables the operator to load the sample system to be used that is independent of the position of the batch in the sample changer.

DATA PROCESSING

Speeds the programs

WORK involved in preparing applications programs can be cut down and development costs can be developed products quicker using floppy disc "software machines" introduced by Computer Automation.

They can reduce costly, tedious and time-consuming tasks usually associated with preparing, debugging and executing programs and help to maintain data and program files and make up-dating programs easier.

Batch processing machines, they take command inputs from a keyboard or from job files containing job control language statements. The operator can load the disc with a string of jobs, start up the system and let it get on with the work—there is no need to sit at the machine

yarn from one to the other. This means that speeds are increased as the time taken for a single rapier to withdraw is effectively unproductive or "dead" time.

With most new type looms a fringe is produced along the selvage and this, particularly for, say, suitings, is considered a definite disadvantage. Now a completely new approach to the rapier loom has been developed in Sweden by Alltex Vavmaskiner A.B. (sold through IRA A.G., Bahnhofplatz 9, CH-8001 Zurich, Switzerland).

Basically the Alltex machine is two looms built as a single unit side-by-side. In the centre is a control and drive section and weft is carried across the looms by means of a rigid rapier. The rapier is double-sided so that as it withdraws from one fabric it is travelling across the other.

It differs from other rapier looms in that the cloth produced on the Alltex have real selvages. Normally looms are built to weave fabrics up to 1800 mm. wide, but special machines can be supplied in weaving widths up to 5500 mm. The robust design of the machine enables it to be used for the production of very heavy cloths such as glass fabrics with a continuous weft supply of clear roving and with a double pick in the shed when a special needle is used for retaining the double pick at the side of the fabric.

Even the manufacture of heavier type fabrics the loom is ideal and it is another feature of the machine that it can be adjusted so that one side can move to weave one type of cloth while the other may be adjusted to weave another. The linkage between the two is through the motion for weft insertion which clearly means that maximum weaving speed is determined by the poorer of the two different wefts being woven.

Incorporated in a temperature compensating circuit that makes calibration of the instrument independent of temperature. A system is included which provides controlled cooling for both samples and the detector.

The unit can be connected to a mosaic printer or teletype, computer on line with time-sharing, or an on-line desk calculator.

Pye Unicam, York Street, Cambridge (0223 58866).

Indicates water

DISCOVERY OF water in a surface that was previously dry—particularly if it has been degraded—can be an expensive mistake.

It can be avoided, claims Channel Electronics (Sussex), by their Aquatrax moisture detector which is about the size and shape of a flashlight. The meter has a small cap which is removed to reveal a pair of probes that are placed in firm contact with the material being tested.

Extent of the dampness is indicated by the frequency of flashes displayed on a recessed neon lamp located just below the probes. Comparison of the rate shown by a suspect area with that of a dry one could, for example, indicate the extent of rising dampness or pinpoint the position of a leak in a wall or a cavity obstruction which could be causing damp patches.

The instrument uses a PPS (9V) or equivalent battery and its overall dimensions are 140 x 38 x 32 mm, weight 106 gm. Made from the company at Cradley Hill Industrial Estate, Searford, Sussex BN25 3JE (0323 894981).

with the work.

Each of the systems contains an Alpha LSI-2 microcomputer, a 16k or 32k word core memory, dual floppy disc and comprehensive operating system. Prices start at \$5,500. More from the company at Denham Way, Maple Cross, Rickmansworth, Herts. (08237 71211).

They can reduce costly, tedious and time-consuming tasks usually associated with preparing, debugging and executing programs and help to maintain data and program files and make up-dating programs easier.

Batch processing machines, they take command inputs from a keyboard or from job files containing job control language statements. The operator can load the disc with a string of jobs, start up the system and let it get on with the work—there is no need to sit at the machine

memory requirements of the communications industry are the main market aim for the new model 4000—Vermont already supplies STC's ADX message switching programme, and Cable and Wireless is another customer.

The rapid access short term memory requirements of the communications industry are the main market aim for the new model 4000—Vermont already supplies STC's ADX message switching programme, and Cable and Wireless is another customer.

Other features include full scale deflection up to 3 kHz, a direct scaling of volts/cm, and a very low power consumption of 100 VA enabling the unit to be run from a 22 V power source combined with an inexpensive static converter.

Weighting 14 kg, the unit also has a five-speed timer, auto-record control, a servo drive system for accurate chart drive, a permanent magnet motor for making reference points on the paper. Overall dimensions are 425 x 470 x 198mm North Feltman Trading Estate, Feltman, Middx. (01-990 1168).

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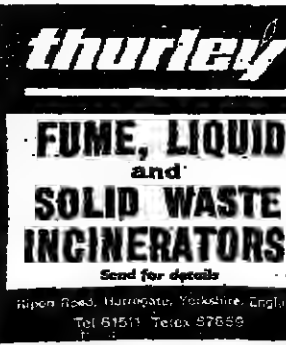
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SOFTWARE

Adabas for timetable production

BRITISH Railways Board has acquired the data base management system ADABAS for immediate installation at its headquarters computer centre in London. This data base management system will support the timetable production system project and will be available for other systems at the centre.

A technical evaluation of a number of packages has been carried out over the last 18 months and ADABAS was chosen because of its manpower saving potential in the system design and programming stages of the project. It already had IBM's IMS in house.

The supplier is also committed by the contract to provide a version of the system that will operate on the larger ICL 2900 computers which confirms that a decision has been taken by BR to acquire one of the big machines (2970), since modifications means a re-write.

The British Railways Board follows similar decisions by ICI and, more recently, Commercial Union Assurance Company, which chose the ADABAS data base management system after a lengthy evaluation of competitors.

Adabas is at 484 Burton Road, Derby, G52 4BZ.

PROCESSING

Closed cycle paper pulp mill

DEVELOPED BY ERCC Envirotech, a "salt-recovery" process is to form an integral part of the operational system of a new Canadian paper pulp mill which has been designed to avoid water pollution.

The Great Lakes Paper Company's new mill at Thunder Bay, Ontario, is claimed to be the world's first closed-cycle bleached kraft mill. Each department has been designed following a study by ERCC Envirotech—for satisfactory water re-use, and integration with the salt recovery process.

The process recycles the environmentally undesirable sodium sulphate and discharges only clean water without any primary or secondary treatment, the company claims.

Additional benefits will include a substantial reduction of the mill's water and energy consumption, while pulp yield, strength and brightness stability will be improved. The capital and operating costs of the non-water-polluting mill, including the salt recovery process, will be considerably lower than those of a conventional mill, external effluent treatment processes, which do not eliminate biological oxygen demand, carbon oxygen demand, colour and toxicity, says the company.

The process will evaporate white liquor in two stages. First, impregnated pulping chemicals are crystallised and returned to the mill's recovery system. Secondly, sodium chloride is removed from the chloride and purified by bleaching and filtration for future use.

ERCC Envirotech is a joint-venture company formed by ERCC Industries, Canadian subsidiary of Albright and Wilson, and the Envirotech Corporation of the U.S.

More information from Albright and Wilson, 1 Knightsbridge Road, London SW1X 7QD. (01-589 8282).

MATERIALS

Protection of materials from decay

CORROSION is an unwelcome part of life and methods of combating it are becoming more sophisticated as knowledge of its causes widens.

Latest addition to literature on the subject is the Corrosion Prevention Directory published by the Department of Industry. This gives details of corrosion advisory services, refers to standards of protection and lists suppliers of protective materials. It should be very useful to those responsible for the design and operation of industrial equipment, to research organisations and students of the subject.

Edited by Dr. P. J. Boden, Department of Metallurgy and Materials Science, University of Nottingham, it is obtainable from H.M. Stationery Office, price £2.50.

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO USERS OF GLYCERINE. New available on the British market for immediate delivery is "Glycerall" — Glycerall is glycerol substituted with a variety of almost all the properties of glycerine at around half the price. Especially suitable for the paper, synthetic resin, textile, cosmetic, rubber, toothpaste, tobacco, and many other industries. For sample and full technical data phone or write to:

VIVA DIPEX LIMITED
130/132 Walmer House, 298 Regent Street, London W1R 5AD.
Telex No: 261120 and 261120. Tel: No: 01-589 5818/19.

CONTRACTS AND TENDERS

THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

NATIONAL DEVELOPING PLAN PROJECT
MINISTRY OF MUNICIPALITIES
SEWERAGE BOARD
BAGHDAD MAIN DRAINAGE

TENDER FOR
CONSTRUCTION OF KARKH TREATMENT WORKS
CIVIL ENGINEERING WORKS CONTRACT (202)
ELECTRICAL & MECHANICAL ENGINEERING WORKS
—SUB-CONTRACTS M31, M32, M33, M41, M42, M43 & M44

The Sewerage Board invites the interested tenders to participate in tendering for the above-mentioned contracts and sub-contracts. A general description of the works included in the contracts and sub-contracts is given below.

1. CONTRACT NO. 1203: Civil Engineering Works for the construction of a sewage treatment plant serving 500,000 people consisting of pumping stations, sand tanks, sludge digestion tanks, aeration tanks, clarification tanks, sludge drying beds, together with construction of various buildings for administration, control, maintenance and other auxiliary works such as water supply, drainage, roads, etc. The contract works include also supply and erection of certain machinery which are described below under Sub-Contract 202-M41—202-M44.

2. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M41—ELECTRICAL SUPPLY & DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM: Supply and erection of electrical equipment for the treatment plant including transformers, switchgear, M.V. and M.V. cable and electrical distribution on the site of the treatment works. Complete telephone system, internal electrical installations within buildings and site lighting.

3. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M42—PUMPING PLANT: Supply and erection of pumps, pumping units in six pumping stations including automatic mechanical, raised screens in some of the stations.

4. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M43—PRIMARY AND FINAL TANK SCRAPERS: Supply and erection of equipment for No. 1 Primary and No. 2 Final settling tanks.

5. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M44—MECHANICAL SLUDGE LIFTER: Supply and erection of a sludge lifter from the sludge drying beds including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the lifter.

6. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M45—SLUDGE DIGESTION PLANT: Supply and erection of equipment for sludge digestion tanks complete with heat exchangers, mixing stirrers, agitators and upflow, together with boilers and hot water circulating pumps.

7. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M46—CLEANING MECHANISM: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 cleaning mechanism which discharges sludge at 30 mvd.

8. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M47—SURFACE AERATION PLANT: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 surface aeration plant including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the plant.

9. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M48—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

10. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M49—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

11. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M50—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

12. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M51—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

13. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M52—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

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21. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M60—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

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42. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M81—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

43. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M82—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

44. SUB-CONTRACT 202-M83—WATER SUPPLY: Supply and erection of a No. 1 and No. 2 water supply system including also supply and installation of the rails for carrying the system.

NOTICE OF INTENT TO CALL FOR TENDERS

FOR AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

The Government of Pakistan has applied for a Development Credit from the International Development Association towards the cost of Khairpur II Tile Drainage and Irrigation Farming Development Project, which is to be carried out by the Water and Power Development Authority.

The project will include provisions for procurement of aerial photography of the Khairpur II area of Pakistan, for which this Notice of Intent to call for tenders is issued.

Interested parties are invited to submit proposals for aerial photography to be carried out in the Khairpur II area of Pakistan, for which this Notice of Intent to call for tenders is issued.

Proposals should be submitted to the Director, Aerial Photography, Water and Power Development Authority, P.O. Box 49, Lahore, Pakistan.

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Building and Civil Engineering

Tarmac in £5m. Yemen venture

A joint venture between Tarmac International and the German companies Trapp and Heitkamp has won a road-building contract in the Yemen Arab Republic.

Following completion of the 256km Sana'a to Taiz road, the joint venture is to undertake a £5m. contract to surface and realign a 64km stretch of road out of Taiz to link up with the Russian-built highway continuing to Hodeidah.

The contract involves substantial earthworks associated with the realignment of the road, and the surfacing of the highway built many years ago by the Americans. A 25cm thick granular base course with a spread and chip surface will be completed in the ten month period of the contract.

The work is being carried out for the Government of the Yemen Arab Republic. The consultants are Ingeroute and Sir Alexander Gibb and Partners (Africa).

Asphalt in water

Tarmac Roadstone Holdings has entered into a joint venture agreement with the Dutch company Bitumaria, a specialist in the application of bitumen to hydraulic engineering. Bitumaria is a leading company in the development of technically and economically feasible underwater applications of asphaltic mixes offering—as both an engineer and a contractor—systems ranging from breakwaters to pipeline protection.

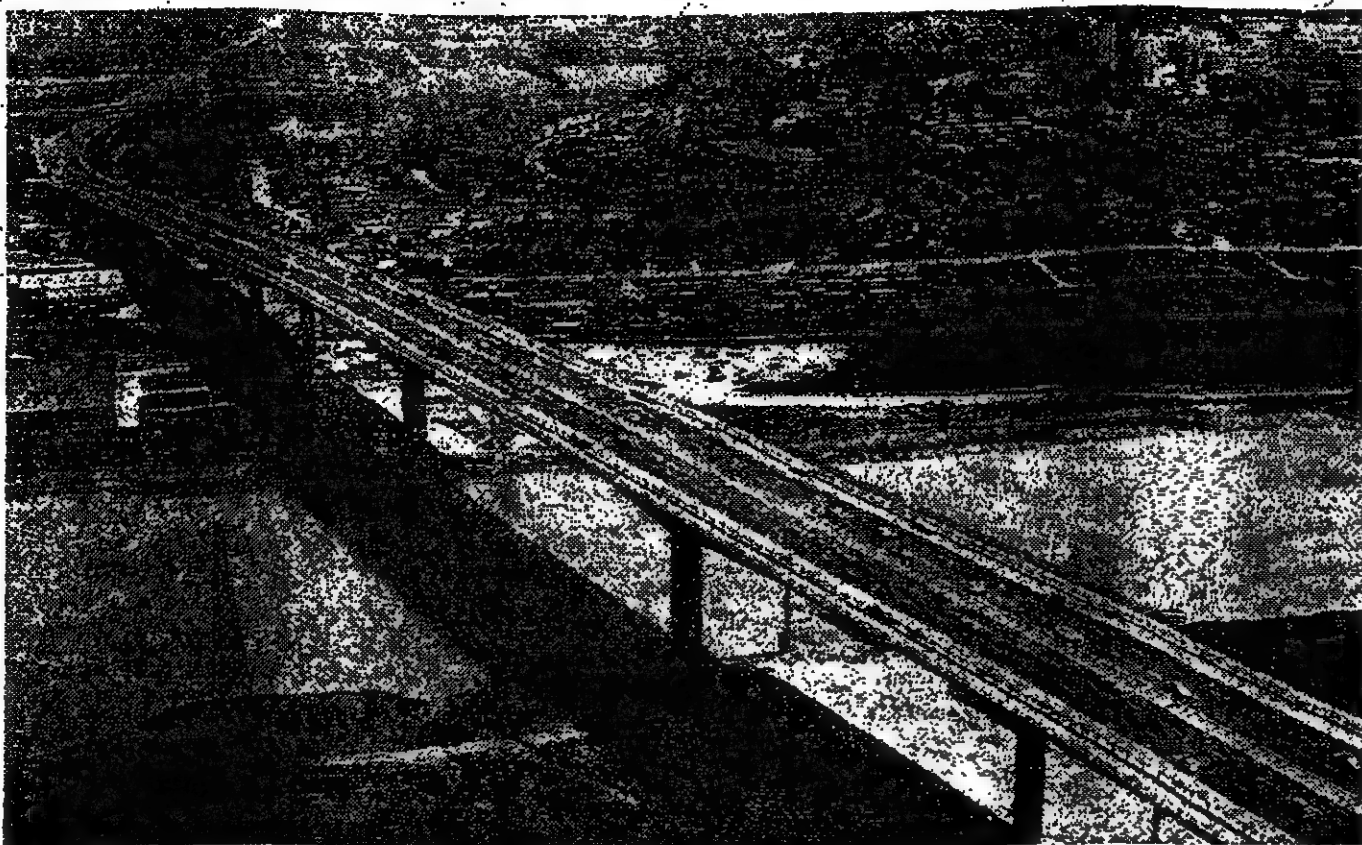
Norwegian natural gas terminal

THE KVAERNER engineering and shipbuilding group in Oslo, Norway, has designed a floating plant for condensing and storing natural gas.

The project has been developed by Kvaerner's shipbuilding subsidiary Moss-Rosenberg Verft, designer and builder of LNG carriers, together with the U.S. ship owner Golar-Larsen Inc. and International Systems and Controls Corporation.

Kvaerner is offering the plant at a fixed price of about £150m. Construction time is under 34 years compressed with about five years at present for similar shore installations. It has a capacity of 10.7m. cubic metres of gas a day or 8m. tons a year.

The platform comprises three large units which can be joined in situ. Two of the barges carry three spherical storage tanks (total capacity 165,000 cubic metres), while the third barge carries the condensation installation developed by J. F. Pritchard and Co., subsidiary of International Systems and Controls Corporation.



The use of structural steel in the design of modern bridges has received a considerable boost from the design award by the British Steel Corporation for the Avonmouth Bridge carrying the M5 motorway over the River Avon west of Bristol. The award is one of five in this seventh year of the scheme. The £350-ft. bridge has a central span of 570 feet and was designed on the steel box-girder principle, exploiting

in the judges' words, "the strength, lightness and versatility of steel to the utmost—the well-balanced proportions of its substructure and superstructure lead to an economical and aesthetically pleasing result." The structural engineers were Freeman Fox & Partners and the architectural consultant was R. E. Slater. The steelwork contractor was Fairfield-Mabey.

H. A. N. BROCKMAN

Protection from the weather

ENCLOSED walkways glazed in transparent plastics materials are now being supplied by William Cox Spaceglazing. Cox claim advantages both in pedestrian safety and in cost-saving, apart from the attraction of a simple, arched design.

For the pedestrian there is protection from the weather, clear all-round vision and there is also less chance of damage from vandalism. The glazing is highly resistant to breakage from missiles thrown from or against the walkway and only a lightweight supporting structure is needed.

Over £2.7m. for Sir A. McAlpine

THREE contracts, together worth over £2.7m., have been awarded to Sir Alfred McAlpine and Son (Southern).

The largest, worth over £2m., is for 212 dwellings for the Telford Development Corporation. These will consist of 172

houses, 30 flats and 10 maisonettes constructed in traditional brick style at Hollinswood, Telford. There will be 12 garages integral with the houses, 30 with the flats, and the contract also includes roads, main drainage and all necessary site development work.

For British Rail, McAlpine is undertaking a contract worth about £500,000, at Oxley, Wolverhampton, where it will construct a covered servicing road and attached maintenance bay.

The third contract, valued at around £125,000, has been awarded to McAlpine by Turner Manufacturing Company, commercial gearbox manufacturer, of Wolverhampton.

This is for an extension at Turner's factory to form 8,575 sq. ft. of warehouse accommodation.

£3m. meat factory extensions

TWO UNILEVER Group meat factories—one at Bridge Road, Southall, Middx., the other at Silverdale Road, Hayes, Middx.—are to be refurbished and extended under a contract awarded to Bovis Construction by the Walk's Meat Company.

The contract is worth about £3m. and the work is programmed for completion in June, 1976.

At the Southall site, Bovis will refurbish five existing factory blocks in preparation for the transfer of production from the Willesden and Hayes factories. In addition, new canteen facilities are to be built.

At Hayes, two buildings will be extensively refurbished (the main building on three floors) to create additional facilities for the production of all cured-meat products following the transfer to Southall of meat preparation and sausage manufacture.

The building work provides for the provision of a 1,000m² cold store and the demolition of a 45-metre high brick chimney, which is to be replaced by a precast concrete one of a similar height.

Bungalows go by air

FIVE BRITISH made bungalows are being flown from Birmingham to Kano airport by "Skymonster" to meet the urgent housing requirements of U.K. staff working in Nigeria. The bungalows, manufactured by Youngman System Building, took to the air to avoid the delays currently being experienced at Nigerian ports where ships are having to wait several months to off-load mainly cement cargoes.

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Private Home Office, Tel: 01-293 2003 BRANCHES NATIONWIDE

By-pass work worth £2.3m.

MEARS Construction has won a £2.3m. contract from Hertfordshire County Council for the construction of the Bishop's Stortford north-west by-pass.

The contract calls for 4.6 kilometres of rural single carriage-way by-pass linking the existing A120 on the western approach to Bishop's Stortford to the existing roundabout junction of the A11 and the Birchanger Link. This in turn will give access to the M11 north of the town.

Route of the by-pass requires the construction of a number of structures including a 170-metre-long prestressed concrete viaduct over the Stort Valley.

Resin-based wall finish

BLUE CIRCLE Group has a new textured wall finish called Cullaplast which is resin-based and designed for application by plasterers. Cullaplast is for interior and exterior use and can be applied in many textures. Initially it will be available in white and six colours from the standard Sandtex range, but shades can be produced to order.

Cullaplast can be applied to most materials used in construction such as concrete, cement rendering, asbestos cement, plasterboard and gypsum plaster, subject to their being sound, smooth, clean and dry.

Normally, surfaces to which Cullaplast is to be applied do not need keying but do need an application of Cullaplast Primer. This is a liquid product applied by brush or roller and it dries in 2-4 hours. Cullaplast Primer is available in colours to correspond with the finish.

Blue Circle Special Products, Portland House, Stag Place, London, SW1E 5BJ, (01-823 2486).

Cover-up in Montreal

WEAVING OF roofing material for what may be the largest retractable roof ever constructed is proceeding at the Krefeld factory of Vereinigte Seidenwebereien AG, West Germany.

Intended for the main Olympic stadium in Montreal, the 22,000 sq. metre awning is made of woven Du Pont Kevlar 49 polyamide fibre coated with pvc, and the complete roof assembly will weigh more than 200 tons.

Dominated by a 168-metre-high inclined tower, into which the roof will retract when not in use, the cone-shaped stadium will be the venue for all track, football and equestrian events, and is designed to seat 70,000 people. The roof is intended to be extended or retracted within 20 minutes, and to cover the 490-metre-long arena completely.

IN BRIEF

● Matthew Hall Ortech has been awarded a contract valued at about £50,000 by Atlas Horns Ingenieros Consultores S.A. to undertake conceptual and engineering design for a tin ore concentrator to be built at Laza in Galicia, Northern Spain. The concentrator will have a tin ore feed capacity of 9,000 tons per day.

● Gough Cooper and Co. has been awarded an £835,000 contract to build 85 houses with roads and ancillary works at Branksome Hill Road, Sandhurst, Berks by Bracknell District Council.

● A £120,000 contract has been won by Sigmund Pulsonier Projects, a member of the SPP Group, to supply pumps and associated equipment for the Helsby sewage treatment works now under construction for the North West Water Authority.

Major study covers Europe's waste

COMMISSION of the European Communities (EEC), Brussels, has chosen Environmental Resources, London, to conduct a study of recycling and reclamation economics in European industry and to recommend financial and other incentives which the Community might apply to encourage increased conservation of scarce materials.

The study, which is being conducted by an ERL team of economists and industrial engineers under the supervision of ERL's Research Director, Dr. Robin Eddell, will focus on 19 major groups of raw materials: ferrous metals, non-ferrous metals, including aluminium, copper, lead and zinc; paper; glass; plastics; rubber; textiles; chemicals; wastes from industrial and other sites; and mining waste and power station ash.

ERL will examine each of these types of materials in terms of five principal parameters. These are the quantity of the materials used in the European Community, the proportion imported and the proportion recycled; the major sources of

this material in industrial and municipal wastes and the chemical and physical form in which these wastes are present; the existing price paid for the secondary materials, compared with the price paid for the corresponding primary materials and a forecast of how the differential may change in the future; the cost to the Community of importing the material and the potential benefit for increasing the quality of the material recycled and re-used with the Community and any major problems of a technical and logistical nature to reduce the potential for recycling the material.

A further stage of ERL's work will examine selected materials with reference to processes available for reclaiming them and questions associated with the collection of these wastes for processing: the cost of transport and any savings in the pre-treatment and disposal costs that would otherwise be required if the material were not reclaimed.

ERL is at 01-486 8277.

More Ford loaders and excavators

IMPROVED equipment for the construction and earthmoving industries is to be marketed by the Ford Motor Company's tractor operations division.

Its latest venture is a new range of 180 degree excavator/loaders.

The current 3550 model is to be replaced by the 54 bhp 420 which is available as a tractor/loader or excavator/loader, while the 62 bhp 550 range is to replace the present 4550 model.

Improvements are said to include a better design of cab, redesigned front end loader and better comfort and safety for the operator.

Loader breakout force of the 550 is 8,000 lb with lift capacity to full height of 4,700 lb. This model is available as a side shift excavator/loader (maximum digging depth 13.5 ft 6 in.), a centre pivot excavator/loader (maximum digging depth 16 ft 6 in.) and as a tractor/loader (1 cubic yard capacity).

The 420 machines are stated to incorporate engine improvements, giving reduced noise and smoke emission. Two-lever control for backhoe operation is standard and so is hydraulic clamping.

Entries into buildings are a few of the applications.

Supplied as a two-part material, in use, equal amounts are cut from each bar of the two-part pack—one white and one black—and each piece rolled separately into a long round "string". The two strings are then placed together and folded, kneaded and rolled until colour uniformity is achieved. The putty is applied firmly to the prepared surface, working it in a manner similar to that used with modelling clay. It is then smoothed or shaped as required. Hardening will occur within approximately one hour of mixing and, when fully cured (in approximately 18 hours at 30 degrees C, 72 hours at 8 degrees C and one week at 0 degrees C), it may be painted and polished.

Sealcrete is at Atlantic Works, Oakley Road, Southampton SO9 4FL. 0703 777331.

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Wimpey busy in Canada

GEORGE WIMPEY Canada has won contracts worth £4.7m. for site preparation, roads and sewers.

The largest of these is for the Ontario Housing Corporation at Scarborough, a one year contract which has now started and is valued at £1,740,000.

For Grossman Holdings of Whitby a one year £1.6m. contract for the servicing of Lynde Valley Estates has also begun. The remaining contracts are for the township of Nepean (£575,000), Monarch Construction Company, Scarborough (£160,000), City of Brantford (£170,000) and Ontario Housing Corporation, Stratford (£435,000).

£1.6m. job for Lovell

HARLOW Development Corporation has awarded a £1.6m. contract to Lovell Housing for the erection of houses and flats at Guilford, Old Harlow, Essex.

The contract, on which work has started, will provide 170 dwellings.

The Lovell timber frame construction system will be used, first-floor cladding being either pvc boarding or stained softwood boarding and ground-floor cladding in brick.

Quantity surveyors are Oswald E. Parry and Partners, an engineering consultants are Howard Humphries and Sons and the Corporation's chief architect is Alex J. McCowan.

Flats to be improved

CORRALL CONSTRUCTION has been awarded a contract worth nearly £300,000 by the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea for the modernisation of a block of flats.

The modernisation of the pre-war, 47-flat Dacre House, Beaufort Street, Chelsea, London, SW3, includes the provision of central heating, the modernisation of kitchens and bathrooms, redecoration and the installation of two lifts.

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That's a greater degree of commitment than many banks undertake. But then Williams & Glyn's is a rather different kind of bank. Among other things it is geared to quick decision making because it is organised so as to give more management time and effort to individual accounts.

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FINANCIAL TIMES SURVEY

Monday November 10 1975

THE BUILDING INDUSTRY

As the 36th International Building and Construction Exhibition opens at Olympia this week, the industry finds itself at the bottom of its worst recession for many years. How long before the upturn will be seen?

AS ONE construction industry leader recently pointed out, building was not so much in a recession but in a chasm of Grand Canyon proportions and it is certainly true that commentators on the construction scene have run almost as low on superlatives to describe the recession as builders have of work.

Opinions on how bad things have been and how much worse they seem set to become vary enormously but everyone is agreed that the building sector is suffering from one of its worst periods of activity for many years. In 1974, the industry went into sharp reverse across the whole range of construction work and overall output ended up somewhere between 8 per cent. and 10 per cent. down on the previous year.

Guesswork

For 1975, the pattern of construction has continued and the latest estimates indicate that a further fall of around 6 per cent. will have been recorded this year. As for next year, continuing decline is anticipated, though not quite of the same proportions. A 2 or 3 per cent. fall is expected for the moment this estimate must be regarded as guesswork and no one is making any effort to suggest what will happen in 1977.

To date, the industry has been forced to shed around 10,000 workers and statements high earlier this year suggested the figure may well

reach 250,000 before an improvement begins have begun to take on a disquieting ring of truth.

Companies as well as individuals have fallen victim to the recession, with public and private companies bowing to the enormous pressures inflicted upon them at a time of high inflation and low demand. Long-established building companies highly regarded for their skills and standards of workmanship have been lost for ever, along with larger operations that no one really believed could actually shut down.

But although the situation is serious, experiences have differed quite widely, depending upon which area of construction is involved. For the house builders, 1975 has been generally better than most dared hope, though by no means exceptional. After 1974, when total housing starts struggled to reach only 250,000 homes and monthly output at one stage sank as low as 8,000 units, the current 12 months should look positively respectable.

It seems likely that this year will reach around 300,000 while completions may total about 280,000 against 268,000 in 1974. In the last boom of 1972, starts amounted to 350,000 and completions stood at 330,000.

During the year, the local authority housing sector has quite consistently provided a brighter picture than has the private market and council house completions for 1975 look like beating the owner-occupied total.

The situation has been such that speculative builders have seen little prospect of selling

their product at a price which makes a reasonable profit possible. Many are still smarting from their experiences of the last boom, when land prices reached unheard of heights and their financial capacity to step up output now has been severely restricted.

But the position has changed significantly in recent months. Builders concentrating on the lower-priced homes are now, in fact, pursuing very active building programmes and there size

of the severity and extent of the well-publicised financial difficulties currently facing local authorities. In non-housing areas, the position seems a great deal less optimistic. The 12 per cent. fall in public sector building work recorded in 1974 is expected to be followed by a further 7 per cent. or 8 per cent. drop this year, although little change is then forecast for 1976. The need to contain the size of the Government's

appears to be no lack of demand from potential customers. The building societies continue to report a very healthy flow of funds and with lending levels reaching record totals, the outlook for private house sales certainly looks stronger than at any time since 1972.

At the same time, however, there is every chance that the modest rate of expansion which seems possible next year in the private housing field might be at least partially offset by a drop in output in the previously buoyant council housing sector. It is difficult to see how the total public housing programme of around 3 per cent. this year can be maintained or increased in the coming months in view

of the severity and extent of the well-publicised financial difficulties currently facing local authorities.

In non-housing areas, the position seems a great deal less optimistic. The 12 per cent. fall in public sector building work recorded in 1974 is expected to be followed by a further 7 per cent. or 8 per cent. drop this year, although little change is then forecast for 1976. The need to contain the size of the Government's

many sectors, the pundits are suggesting that 1977 should see the start of a revival, no-one is venturing any such forecasts for commercial work.

Not unnaturally, the construction industry and its suppliers and associated professions have been making strenuous efforts to achieve some stimulation for a sector which has grown accustomed to taking the rough with the smooth but which this time feels enough is enough.

Industry leaders appreciate in their heart of hearts that if they are looking for Government help, then the extent of that assistance is going to be strictly limited in view of the overall economic situation now con-

fronting the nation. The help which has just been announced is, in fact, as much as people can reasonably expect in the circumstances, though demands for assistance will no doubt be made with increasing regularity.

The September anti-unemployment package, apart from containing measures which should indirectly assist the construction industry, included a £20m. advance factory building and the direct injection of £32m. into building work due to be

completed by the end of 1976. It was somewhat ironic that on the same day as details of the £32m. package were announced, the Government's own figures showed that construction orders fell back by £123m. during August alone. No more was needed to keep the extent of the Government's help in its true perspective, though people in the industry were reluctant to criticise any measures designed to help them out.

The money is to be channelled largely into assisted areas and will go in improving council housing, on the national health service and on educational facilities. Other, local

authority services will also benefit and the number of jobs created or lost of jobs averted should be in the region of 6,000.

But as if the present crisis was not enough to occupy the minds of everyone involved with the building sector, there remains very real concern about the effects which the recession will have on the sector's future ability to cope with periods of high demand. This is an old problem but one which is accentuated when the interminable "stop-go" cycle takes on a sharper curve.

Materials producers are forced to shut down capacity which may never again be available, building companies contract, fewer trainees are taken and together these developments undermine the industry's potential capacity. When an upturn in work follows, the industry finds it impossible to cope with the demand, hence the overheating of 1972-73 which then gave way to the unprecedented downturn of 1975 and the present day. The worry is that if the next upturn comes rapidly—admittedly a remote chance for the moment—then the inflationary price increases of the last two years will reappear, possibly more acutely because of the sudden switch from slump to boom.

There is now, more than ever before, an urgent need for a considered approach to the problems of demand management in the building industry and there are signs that at least some progress is being made in this direction.

Already, efforts to tie the rate of output in the private housing

field to the capacity of the builders and the availability of finance for house purchase appear to be helping with the gradual expansion of the private sector.

There also appears to be a greater awareness on the part of the Government on the major part it could play in reducing damaging stop-go cycles by adopting a more selective approach to the way in which it controls public capital expenditure programmes, delaying or bringing forward orders when parts of the industry become significantly overheated or under-utilised.

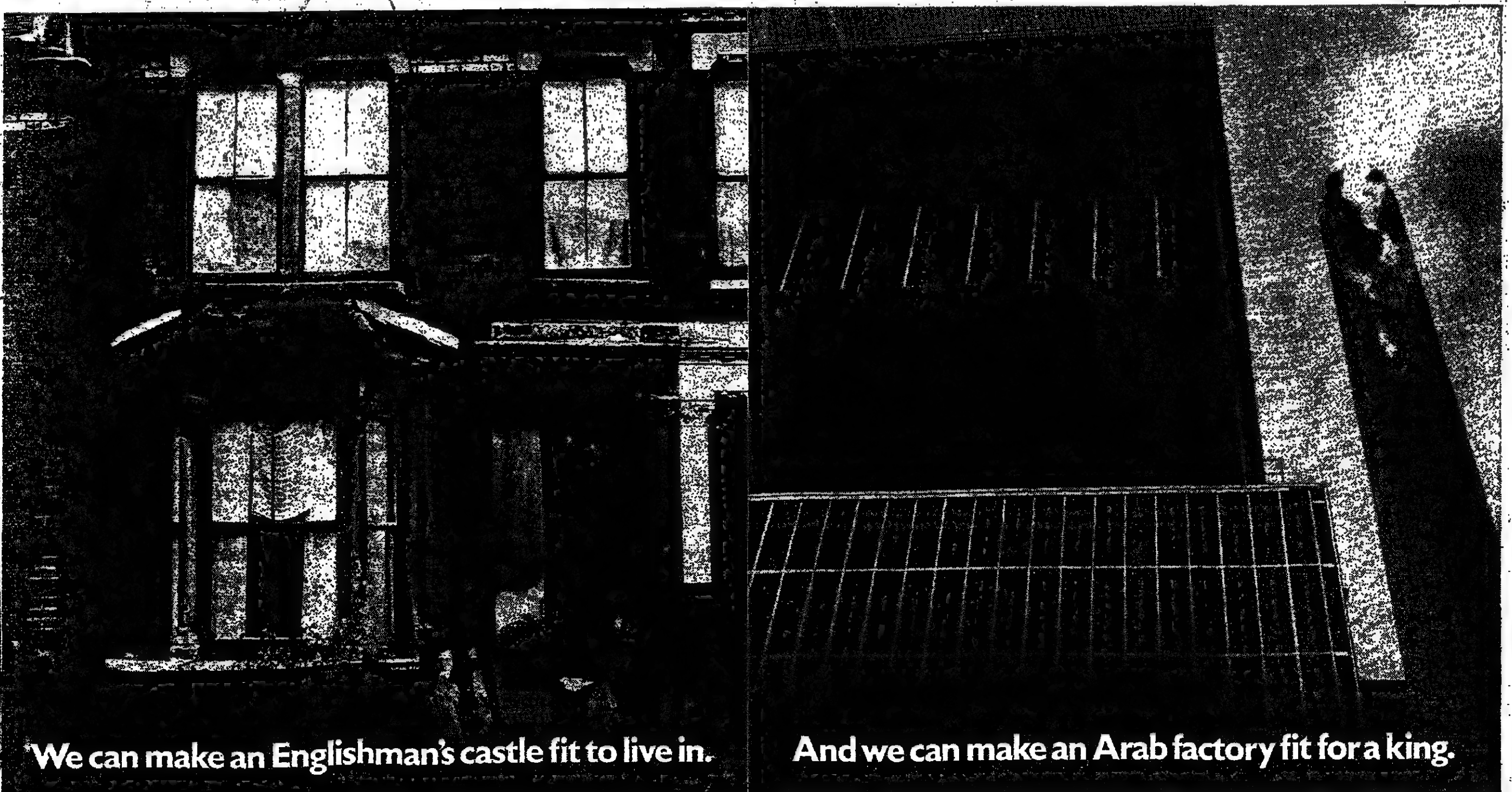
Regulator

Because of the long lags between decisions to decrease or increase expenditure and the resulting rise or fall in actual building activity, it is generally acknowledged that the quick revision of capital programmes is a poor method of managing the economy in the short-term, but at the same time the construction industry can never realistically expect to escape being used as an economic regulator to some extent.

There seems to be a chance at least that a better understanding on the part of the Government of just how the industry works may well eventually lead to some levelling out of the wild fluctuations in fortunes which have beset builders and the building professions for so long. If today's recession achieves that, it could hopefully be the last of such enormous proportions.

The pangs of recession

By Michael Cassell



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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY II

Housing upturn awaited

FOR THE second year in succession, Britain's house building industry has dragged itself along on the bottom of a recession and still awaits positive signs that the worst will soon be over. Government Ministers who for months put a brave face on a never-ending succession of depressing statistics, apparently have now decided that it is best not to comment at all unless really necessary.

It is certainly true that, for the housing sector as a whole, the current year will be better than last, though this is little consolation when it is recalled just how bad 1974 was. During that year work began on about 250,000 homes compared with 350,000 in the last boom of 1972, while completions fell to 268,000 from the 1972 total of 320,000.

The performance went down as the worst for 20 years and projections of an equally disastrous 1975 came from many varied but venerable sources. In the event, the current year will not have turned out quite so badly, although the figures leave little room for satisfaction on the part of the Government, the builders or those people anxious to find some where better to live.

From among the many forecasts available and the actual figures for the first eight months of this year it is possible to draw some conclusions about the industry's likely achievements in 1975. It looks as though the industry's overall number of starts may well reach around 300,000 or not far short. In the council housing sector, starts during the first eight months of the year had reached 110,000 against the 1974 12 months total of 146,000; by the end of the year they could top 160,000.

In the private sector, starts by the end of August had reached 97,000 against the 1974

Completions

On the completions side of the equation, the combined total for both sectors this year may top 280,000 against the 269,000 of 1974. By the end of August private sector completions amounted to just over 95,000 and could reach a 1975 total of around 140,000, which would represent a repeat of last year's situation. In the local authority sector, completions in the first eight months totalled 101,000 against 129,000 for the whole of 1974 and should end up slightly ahead of the private housing completions figure.

Although these statistics are more encouraging than many people, at the start of the year, might have believed possible, there remains little optimism that the modest improvements of 1975 will be continued and built upon next year. Indeed, several forecasting panels do not see much progress at all in 1976, with output in some respects falling back again.

This outlook is a reflection of the pessimism which the house builders themselves now portray. For whether their eyes and ambitions are turned towards the local authority housing sector or the private market, prospects are not of the type which seem likely to instil encouragement and enthusiasm into their operations.

Faced with the slump in the private housing market, following the amazing events of 1972 when the domestic property world seemed to go temporarily insane, many builders were forced to turn to the council housing field in order to keep going. As a result, the local authority sector for some time

has provided a consistently brighter picture than the private field, with both starts and completions in recent months beating output on the other side of the fence.

But circumstances have changed dramatically in what seems a very short space of time and while many still appear surprisingly reluctant to make the hard but necessary decisions, it is clear that local authority budgets are in for some tough pruning and housing programmes will become an inevitable casualty of that action. The builders who have come to rely for a greater part of their work on the local council, therefore, face the future with uncertainty.

Neither do they seem any more confident about prospects in the private sector, the area in which most of them prefer to be and where they operate best. They remain confronted with problems left as a legacy from the last boom and face new ones. It is concern over the prospects for stability in the private housing sector which lies behind most builders' reluctance to step up output, combined with continuing severe financial restraints which to-day are felt right across the board.

Until now, builders have simply been faced with a situation where market prices do not cover construction costs and the entire building exercise is therefore best left alone. Many companies were trapped into buying development land at very high prices and building the type of house for which the market virtually collapsed overnight, leaving them with homes unsold and no capital for fresh development. For some, the position to-day remains unchanged, although figures show that the number of new homes still unsold has fallen by more than half in the past year.

But costs have been rising rapidly and the builders' ability to sell at a profit is of little consequence to suppliers, also stagnated or fell back, dramatically in some cases, was a market hit by inflation. A market in which prices for homes have to be avoided—as the output figures show.

At last, however, house prices are now beginning to show the sort of movement which is possibly sufficient to encourage builders to venture out. It seems likely that average prices this year will have risen by around 14-15 per cent, not as much as builders would like but perhaps enough to start them thinking—and possibly building. At the lower end of the market, activity is already well under way.

The whole area of house prices has, of course, become a major centre for political interest and whereas two years ago the great debate was on the cost of a mortgage, it now centres on the price of the house itself. The building societies and the Government are pledged to ensure that the enormous price increases of 1972 never return, and for the first time, there is now a system for the close monitoring of the housing market which should provide a more stable pattern of development in future.

Reluctant

There is a dilemma, however. The builders will remain largely reluctant to step up output without the clear prospect of a reasonable price rise, making significant price rises a vital prerequisite to any major expansion programme. On the other hand, the Government and the building societies are pledged to contain prices. A point must be reached, therefore, where prices can rise at an "acceptable" rate, allowing building

programmes to expand but equally keeping the cost of home ownership within the bounds of reality for the public, especially the newcomers to the owner-occupied housing market. For the moment, it looks as though some balance has been achieved—although the real test has yet to come. The major problem will be the few new homes now in the pipeline as a result of the builders' reluctance to build, for as the existing stock of unsold homes continues to diminish, the prospects for overvaluing of house prices increase daily.

This time, however, the building societies are far more aware of their responsibilities and influence and if prices begin to soar, the supply of funds will undoubtedly be tailored so that effective demand is only allowed to run broadly parallel with actual supply.

Signet has been anxious to make it clear that their present policies are aimed at introducing a stability into their affairs which, in turn, should reflect on the housing industry. They are confident that, even in the event of a dramatic change in current conditions, their lending programmes nevertheless can be maintained at high levels for some time to come. In this way the societies hope to remove builders' doubts about the availability of mortgage funds for potential borrowers when the homes now being built are ready for sale.

It is an attitude which should please the builders, but slightly more reliable prospects on the mortgage finance side will not be enough to stimulate the sort of action now required and it is a far wider range of uncertainties which still hold back many builders.

The potential repercussions of the Community Land Bill are calculated to worry the builder far more than the current availability of mortgage finance, for the industry sees the Government's proposed legislation as the biggest threat to its survival. House builders believe that under the proposed law, very little land will become available to meet housing demand, there will be prolonged delays in the release of land by local authorities, houses will become scarcer and more expensive and will not reflect what the consumer actually wants.

Michael Cassell

Community Land Bill

THE COMMUNITY Land Bill, Tax with a flat rate of 80 per cent, rising to 100 per cent, on the Second Appointed Day when all land will change hands, at current use value.

It is on the hope that Conservative would significantly reduce this 80 per cent figure that advice to hold rather than sell development land is based. Though committed to repealing

development land legislation, the Tories have not committed themselves to any specific change of the tax legislation (which they, after all, began with their Development Gains Tax plans). Some figure around 60 per cent, is often suggested as the level a future Conservative government would adopt.

In such an event the hope is for both a high market price, with a return of confidence, and a lower tax take. In the case of the Community Land Bill, which is at present productive, this is a powerful case and one which might eventually produce a shortage of building land if local authorities do not play the full role envisaged under the community land scheme. Its benefits on unproductive land, granted an acceptable price, are more arguable. What housebuilders fear is that while there will be enough building land for the next two years, there will then be severe shortages.

But to blame this on fears of the Community Land Bill may be to paint a false picture. The reason for few deals being done and at low prices is primarily because there are so few buyers in the market. The problems of the housebuilders are obvious enough; and most of those who do not have serious liquidity problems have adequate land banks.

It is the cost of financing these land banks which have kept most buyers out of the market during this period. Equally, it is uncertainty about future housing demand which both builders and building societies identify as the main cause of the sluggish, if slightly improved trend in private housing starts this year. Until it is clear that builders can recoup their hugely increased costs on medium and low-priced housing, no active market in building land will develop.

None of this is directly influenced by the Land Bill. But Development Gains Tax and its intended transition to Development Land Tax has undoubtedly influenced many potential sellers. Indeed it now seems that the standard advice handed out to landowners is to hang on: either Labour's land scheme, like the two before it, will decay of its own accord, or else the Conservatives will return to office and scrap it.

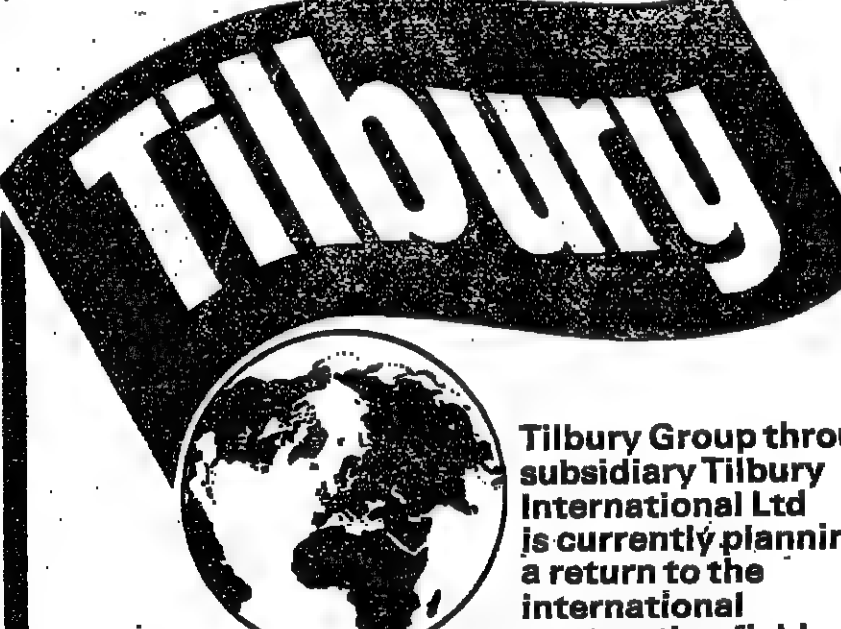
Political

The first let-out must be regarded as a distinct possibility, although development land and planning profits have become even more political issues since the late Sir Henry Wells' Land Commission was allowed to atrophy. But on the availability side, governed by the sellers' attitudes, it is very unlikely that any Labour government would drop the tax side of its land policy.

So ignoring the much increased compulsory acquisition powers which might be wielded by councils with the money and inclination to enthusiastically carry out their new planning role, a Labour government will not lower the tax burden on land-sellers. Development Gains Tax, with individuals taxed at income tax rates and companies taxed at corporation tax rates will be replaced by the Development Land

develop, this time factor may prove even more uncertain. A planning permission will be immediately suspended, with the local authority then given up to two months to notify the developer whether it wishes to buy his land. Then the authority has another year in which to make its Compulsory Purchase Order. Such an Order needs to be confirmed by the Secretary of State and then the authority could take up to another three

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



Tilbury

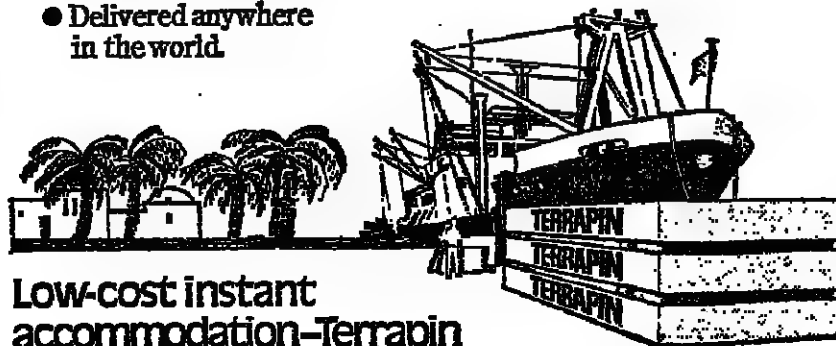
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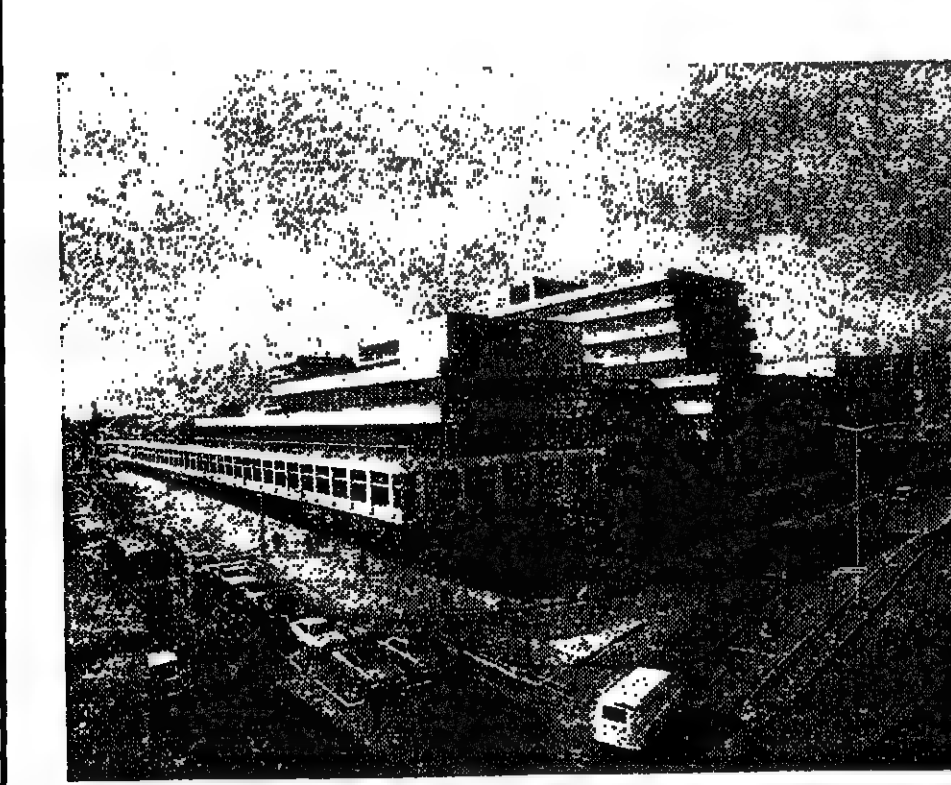
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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY III



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High level of bankruptcies

THE CONSTRUCTION industry has always been a high-risk business in every sense, not just because of the potential dangers lurking on site but also because of the ever-present threat of financial collapse in the boardroom. Never before it seems have the inherent risks in the building sector materialised with such depressing regularity.

For an industry which has the unenviable record of nearly always topping the list of bankruptcies, the last two years will prove to have beaten all previous records, with building operations both large and small, private and public, succumbing to the pressures imposed upon them by one of the worst periods of activity in post-war years. The toll to date includes a handful of major companies and an estimated 170,000 workers.

It used to be the case that the small, speculative builder was responsible for most of the industry's failures, invariably as a result of his own ineptitude in either building or management—or both. But the pattern has changed dramatically this year, with more public companies in the building sector going into liquidation or receivership than in any year for well over a decade.

Borrowed

Some of the most notable casualties this year have, not surprisingly, come from the housing sector, where output has fallen dramatically in a market which went cold almost as quickly as it heated up in 1972. The major problem has been the use to which builders put their borrowed money, namely the purchasing of land at a time when values were racing ahead. The situation was such that an actual building operation was hardly necessary, with the temporary acquisition of land leading to massive profits on the subsequent sale a few months later.

The builders, because of the pressures on them to supply homes immediately and apparently at almost any price, rushed in and bought without any regard to the chances of a reverse in the market. In the event, it came with a vengeance and companies were left sitting on land stocks, purchased on borrowed money but not wanted for development by them or

anyone else. But if the prospect of healthy profits disappeared almost overnight, the high interest charges on their borrowings remained.

In a great many cases, the problems had reached crisis point over a year ago but they did not manifest themselves until well into this year. The reason was that the banks were only too well aware that if they had tried to liquidate the large land banks at that time, they would have flooded the market with something no one wanted.

They knew that if any sales had been achieved, the prices would have reflected the stagnant state of the housing industry and the banks would have ended up losing their money rather than getting it back. But with a gradual improvement in both the immediate situation and the general outlook for housing activity, the banks could begin to see sense in stepping in and this is precisely what happened during the summer.

One of the biggest and best known names to cease trading in 1975 was Baccal Construction, which paid the ultimate price for high interest charges on money borrowed to finance land sales. Losses on fixed price contracts added to the company's problems.

Another casualty was Northern Developments, the country's second largest house builder, where a Receiver was appointed in June after the supporting banks had decided enough was enough. The company has, however, survived and operates to-day under the Receiver's control.

Among the other names to disappear this year have been Cox Industries, Greensquare Properties, and Lewston International. French Kier, one of the country's largest motorway contractors, might also have joined the list but for substantial financial assistance from the Government which enabled it to carry on with its

ing estimating an impossible task and leading some contractors into serious difficulties. The position has been worse still for some small operations who would readily admit to knowing a great deal about building but little about how to cope with the mounting financial problems which have recently beset him.

The picture has not, however, been one of total gloom and some companies—usually the larger, better organised ones—have so far managed to acquit themselves very well in the face of such bleak surroundings. But while some have been reporting improved profits, most of these have been forced to add the customary warning that if present ordering levels are maintained, then their successes so far might well be more difficult to maintain over the next year or two.

The fact is that building output seems set to get still worse before it gets better. Companies have to some extent been living on the work awarded to them before the slump but as the full extent of the economic situation begins to bite and investment programmes hold fire, the pipeline is drying up quickly.

But some of the biggest operations appear reasonably happy with life. Not every house builder has been having a disastrous time, as Bryant Holdings, the Birmingham-based operation can confirm. While profits last year were down to £1.56m, against £2.3m, the previous time, the final outcome was better than the company had been suggesting earlier on. Bryant says that its order book is reasonable and homes sales are holding up, though profit margins have been slimmed down as costs continue to escalate. In every area but housing, the company is now protected by escalation clauses.

Overseas

John Laing announced a first-half profit increase from £5.53m to £5.97m in September and said it expects last year's £11.2m to be passed. Laing has not built up overseas markets to quite the same extent as some of its competitors, with the U.K. providing roughly 60 per cent. of its trading profits. Faced with low levels of activity at home, however, its overseas business is expanding and now accounts for just over 20 per cent. of turnover, although some of the benefits of this steady build up will not be felt yet.

Costain, another company to report recently, has large overseas markets which in its last full year accounted for over half of the group's turnover and over 60 per cent. of profits. In the first half of 1975, pre-tax profits have risen from £4.19m, to £5.51m and are expected to pass the previous year's £10.68m.

Another international civil engineering giant, Taylor Woodrow, reported a good rise in pre-tax profits for the first half of 1975 and expects last year's record pre-tax figure of £10.47m to be beaten. Again, work abroad is helping the company to cushion the effects of the recession in the U.K. and over 50 per cent. of its profits are coming from abroad.

So the picture is not one of total depression, although the overriding worry is just how much worse the home market in all sectors of construction activity can get. Whether the bottom has yet been reached will not be clear for some time yet and in the meantime the builders will be doing what they can to cut costs, improve efficiency and seek out new areas of activity to spread their operations over a wider, more stable, base.

Quentin Girdham
Property Correspondent

Michael Cassell

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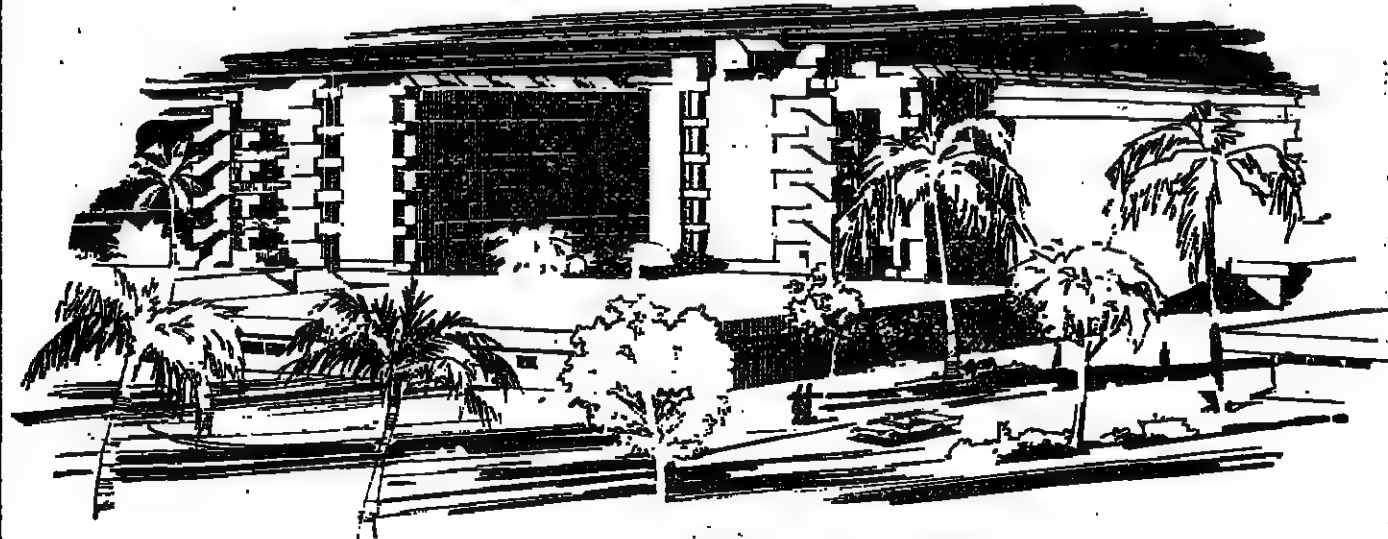
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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY IV

Recruitment worries

GOVERNMENT PLANS for special construction projects centred on the modernising of old hospitals and schools will at least go some way towards reducing the industry's chronic unemployment levels which, because of the recession, stand at about 172,000.

But it seems unlikely that this £30m. Government scheme, announced at the beginning of the month, will have much effect on the problems of apprentice recruitment — an issue of considerable long-term importance to the industry.

With the recession leaving more than 60 per cent. of building companies operating at 75 per cent. capacity or less — as shown in a recent National Federation of Building Trades Employers survey — indications are that apprentice recruiting figures are about 30 per cent. down on this time last year.

This is not yet shown up in official apprentice registration figures published by the industry's National Joint Council, because these are always six months out of date as employers only register apprentices once they have completed a six months' probationary period. But the NFETS maintain that a truer, and more worrying, assessment of the situation, can be made from reports by member companies stating they are only recruiting apprentices at about 70 per cent. of last year's level.

There has also been about a dozen cases of apprentices actually being made redundant because of the financial plight of their employers.

Alarmed at this trend the NJC is considering the possibility of developing a scheme whereby apprentices once taken on are safe-guarded from being made redundant should their company collapse. Such a scheme would probably involve apprentices being passed on to other companies in such an event.

The industry's trade unions are, however, understandably wary of such a scheme which could have the very reverse effect to that intended and could actually encourage some employers to unload their apprentices.

For the more general problem of saving apprentice recruitment the industry is

looking towards the Government for help. But although the Government is prepared to increase the numbers of those given full-time training under the Construction Industry Training Board schemes the worry is that there will be no jobs for these apprentices once they are trained.

The Government has offered to extend training at Skill Centres or technical colleges to any CITB trainees unable to find jobs but the industry fears that under these proposals apprentices may never get the chance of site experience. It has been suggested, however, that the Government's recently announced job creation programme might provide scope for some apprentices to go on site.

Apprentices

About a quarter of the 12,000 annual intake of apprentices is taken up by building companies with the remainder placed on courses by the CITB. About half of the total are in full time training with the rest on day or block release.

While these efforts are being made to protect the traditional apprenticeship scheme there is some evidence of a union backlash against the Government's short stay training schemes at Skill Centres. A recent meeting of delegates from the T&GWU's building crafts section calls for an end to this form of training building craftsmen because of high unemployment levels. It was felt there might be disputes if newly-trained men were given jobs instead of already traditionally trained men who are unemployed.

Meanwhile one effect of the recession which is causing little sorrow in the industry, certainly on the union side, is that because of the changed labour market the so-called "lump" system of labour-only sub-contracting has virtually disappeared.

The system, which often includes large-scale tax evasion, can only really flourish at times of labour shortage. If left unchecked it is certain to reappear as the industry emerges from the recession but this will prove all the more difficult because of attacks on the lump which are now coming from several directions.

First trade unions are putting pressure on employers at sites where lump labour is used. But such moves, which often involve strike action, can only be carried out where the unions have sufficient members. This is not too often in an industry

where only about one-third of the labour force is unionised.

Secondly, the NFBTE has its own voluntary anti-lump register of building contractors which currently comprises some 1,500 companies including all the major ones. Some local authorities will only grant contracts to registered contractors.

But of far greater significance are Government moves to tighten up the tax system. Already there have been many well publicised prosecutions mainly involving forging of tax exemption certificates and the introduction soon of redesigned certificates including the holder's photograph should be another blow to the tax evaders.

The Government is also setting up a Construction Industry Manpower Board to advise it on the effects of measures designed to tackle abuses of the labour-only system but it is clear that these abuses will not be eliminated until the Government does something to even out the public sector's demands on the industry and end the continual stop-go situation and until the industry itself eliminates the shortage of skilled craftsmen.

As in all others, the construction industry has to comply with the £6 limit on pay increases set out in the Government's anti-inflation pay policy. But building employers and unions interpret that policy differently.

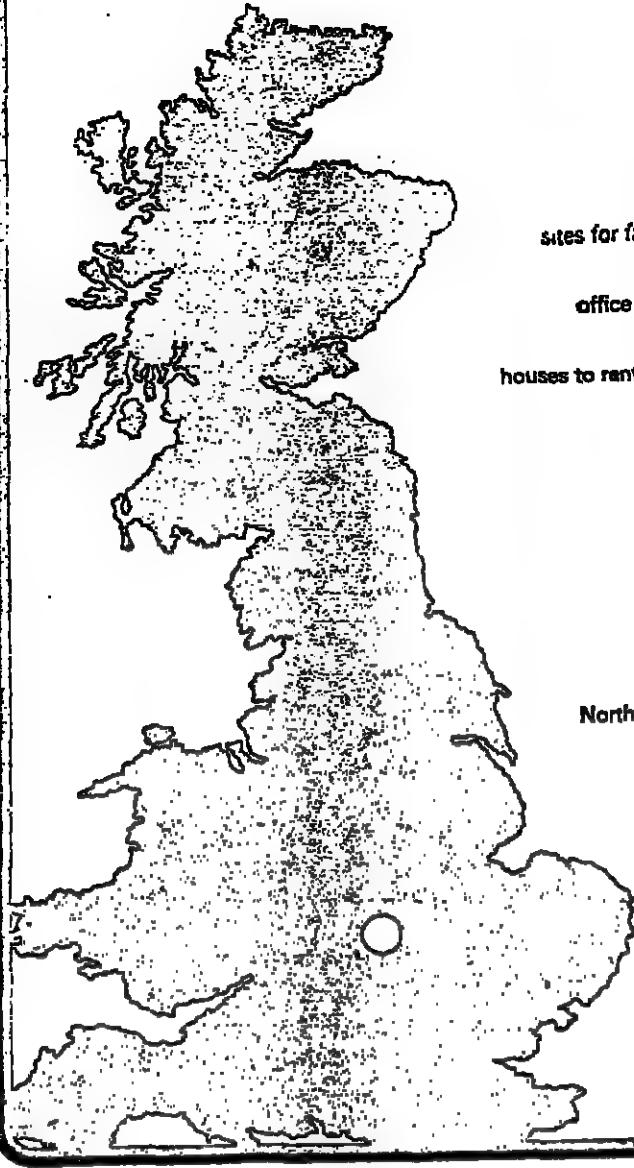
The unions have just lodged a demand for immediate £6 increases even though their last basic pay rise, the second stage of a national agreement, was in June. They claim to be invoking a clause in that agreement allowing them to table further demands if there was an exceptional jump in the cost of living during the 18 months life of the agreement.

They argue that the Government's ruling that there should be 12 months between settlements should be applied as from the first stage of their deal last January. If it had to be applied at all. Ideally they want to return to their traditional October annual pay date.

For their part the employers maintain that the state of the industry and the Government's policy both preclude any further increases before next June. Government guidance will no doubt be sought before negotiations progress much further.

Roy Rogers
Labour Correspondent

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Notorious safety record

SOME 161 workers lost their lives in construction accidents last year alone. And that was a considerable improvement on the previous year when there were 230 fatal accidents.

The industry is notorious for its poor safety record, an issue spotlighted year after year by the Chief Inspector of Factories. In his latest report he says that despite the great efforts being made by a large number of companies who take health and safety seriously, and despite the increasing toughness of the Inspectorate to those who do not, there is still "an extraordinary and discouraging history of accidents that should not happen."

The Chief Inspector speaks of some contractors who argue about the need to shore excavations even though "there has been over the years a succession of live burials which were clearly avoidable."

The reason why the incidence of accidents in construction should be significantly worse than that for any other industry for which the inspector is responsible owes a lot to the diversity of building activities and the number of sites operated. By contrast with a factory environment where it is possible to establish greater discipline in the operation of machinery, construction is dispersed over thousands of temporary sites.

The workforce tends to be highly mobile. Moreover, there is a high flow of labour in and out of this cyclical industry as

it responds to the peaks and troughs of the national economy. The perennial problem of sub-contract "lump" labour makes regulation of training and safety that much more difficult.

The Factory Inspector points out that the work is often inherently dangerous and the penalties for a moment's thoughtlessness when working on, say, a high scaffold or steel structure, are high. Also, potentially lethal plant is too often operated by men with insufficient training or experience.

Apathetic

"There are many managers and people in the industry who make great efforts to tackle these risks: there are also too many who can only be described as apathetic."

However, managements are being forced to take another look at safety and training within their companies under the Health and Safety at Work Act which came into force in April this year.

Under the legislation companies are required to draw up a written safety policy and the onus is placed firmly upon them to ensure that their workforce is adequately trained.

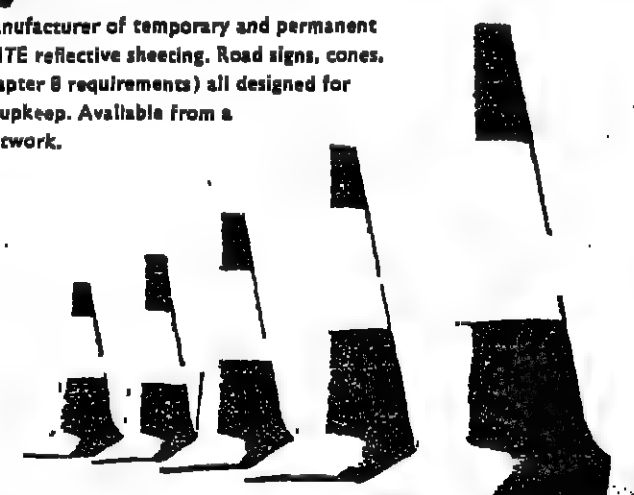
An important sanction made available to the Factory Inspectorate to deal with companies in breach of safety standards is the power to serve a prohibition notice and stop work on the job until the situation has been remedied.

The psychological impact of

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY V

Need to organise for overseas expansion

BRITISH CONSTRUCTION companies, together with the wide range of associated professional services which contribute to the nation's balance of payments in "invisible" sense, have been doing well abroad against a background of home market slump. Although opinions vary a little, there appears to be a general consensus that past success is only a taste of what a correctly organised construction exporting effort could achieve in the future.

The latest statistics from the Department of the Environment show the construction sector's sterling achievements provide indication of how things have been going. In the 12 months to March 1975, orders obtained by U.K. contractors in overseas markets were valued at £980m, current prices, an increase of 12m.—or 86 per cent—on the previous 12 months. Business was won in no less than 108 countries.

The volume of work carried out during the same period at £395m, at current prices, compared with £340m. previously. Work outstanding at the end of March had risen to a healthy £1.18bn, more than double the previous year's level.

Little East

The Department's figures also show where contractors are finding most success, and it is not surprising that the Middle East comes top of the list. Work in Asia as a whole, at £4m, accounted for 51 per cent of the world total and was 9m. above the 1973-74 level. In Eastern countries, notably in Asia, accounted for 7m. of the total. According to the Department, there was a large increase in the value of new contracts obtained in Europe, with a record £161m. in 1975. The EEC Freezone described as "a clear target" for the export effort. Its terms of reference will be the selection of single firms or groups to pursue particular construction projects overseas and to examine ways of harnessing additional resources in the construction sector and professions to meet opportunities abroad.

Thus, finally the package of services, skills and hardware which many developing countries and potential clients require may well be brought together in an acceptable form at Government level, a development which will undoubtedly help efforts in the Middle East and elsewhere, where many materials — to the nation's benefit — appear to be taking on an increasingly important position in near-mammoth proportions.

Much of the pressure for such an organisation did, in fact, come from Middle East governments who were anxious to see the British Government more readily identified with the operations of U.K. companies in their countries.

Hopeful

The formation of a more centrally-oriented export effort, of course, is not going to solve all the problems which confront companies hopeful of capturing a slice of the Middle East market. The problems will be immense and many fingers could get burned if there is too much haste in seeking business in new fields.

The Export Group for Construction Industries and the Association of Consulting Engineers are among the influential bodies which have pointed out some of the pitfalls which lie along the path to overseas success. The Department of Trade has been equally anxious to make people appreciate the realities of the situation.

Though not all the potential business from Middle East nations is of mammoth proportions, it is clear that a great many of the contracts which are beginning to emerge from nations now generating the world's largest financial surpluses, will be of a size which puts them beyond the resources of most contractors. Thus a new approach to joint-ventures and consortia looks inevitable.

The Export Group has pointed out that 80 per cent of the total overseas work obtained by U.K. contractors goes to the big operations. Apart from the sheer financial strength required to tackle £2bn. housing schemes or, more modestly, a £100m. dry dock project, the other necessary resources will also be sorely stretched. The big construction companies already operating in the Middle East—some of them have been well established for many years—could be accused of trying to frighten new competitors off with their constant reminders of the problems they face, but theirs is the voice of experience and their difficulties in obtaining the necessary numbers of staff—from engineering and design personnel, land and quantity surveyors, to accountants and skilled artisans—have been very real at times.

It is not only labour which presents problems. The availability of building materials in countries where support industries for the construction sector barely exist will also cause many headaches. For despite the existing efforts of some developing

Foothold

But while the Middle East has become fashionable in just about every sense, not merely construction, the U.K. construction industry realises that the potential for a greater share of the world's total construction business lies over a far wider area, some of it much nearer home. Few people underestimate the equally challenging problems which confront any U.K. company attempting to gain a foothold in Europe, where countries already have their own well-established construction industries. The opportunities are, nevertheless, there and there are widespread hopes that the previous poor performance in Europe can now be improved.

Africa, too, holds out tremendous potential and, as with many other areas of the globe, U.K. contractors setting out to win business have the distinct advantage of coming from a country whose worldwide reputation in the construction and associated fields will have preceded them. The prospect of closer co-operation and more effective organisation within the U.K.'s construction industries will, it is hoped, lead to a steadily growing share of a fruitful and rapidly expanding world market.

Michael Cassell

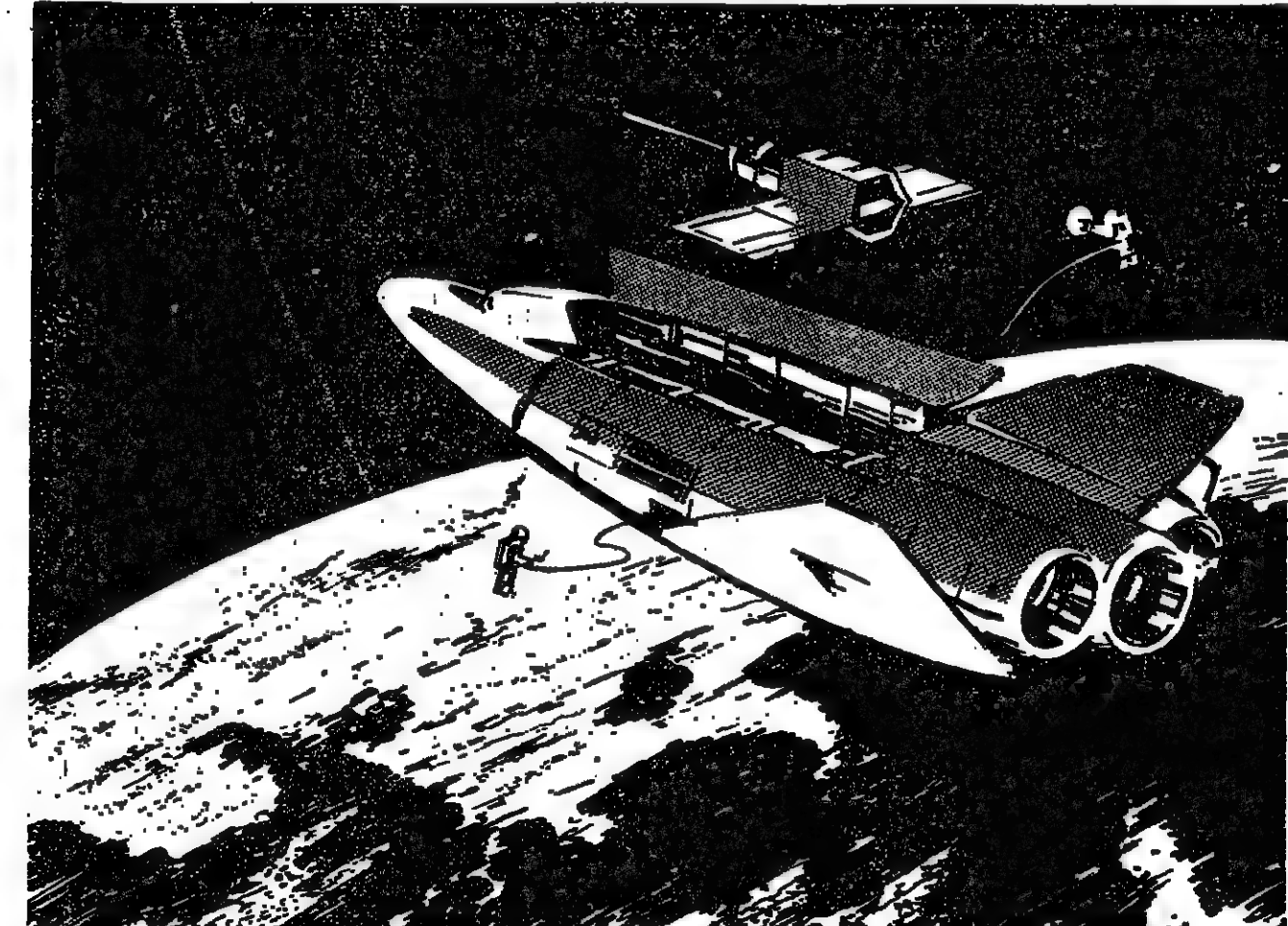


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Safety

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

the new legislation will be important in changing people's attitudes. In an industry where complex as construction, it will take time to work out with management and trade unions policies to cover safety and training. The situation cannot be expected to change overnight.

Mr. Bill Simpson, chairman of the Health and Safety Commission, stressed the responsibility that management must take upon itself when he spoke at the recent safety conference organised jointly by the National Federation of Building Trades Employers and the Federation of Civil Engineers and Contractors.

While he acknowledged that many accidents are the result of individual carelessness or bravado, he stressed that it was the job of management to set the rules and ensure the training necessary for safe working.

Activity

Distressing the drop in fatal accidents in 1974, Mr. Simpson said there was no cause for complacency. The number of construction workers killed fell to 161, but this cannot be explained away as a mere reflection of the lower level of building activity; the statistics show a proportion of 18.4 fatal accidents for every 100,000 men compared with 22.7 in 1973.

It would be foolish to see the 1974 improvement as even starting a trend towards a safer industry, Mr. Simpson insisted. Simple accidents kept recurring "with horrible regularity." Last year alone were responsible for 20 deaths and 2,000 accidents a year.

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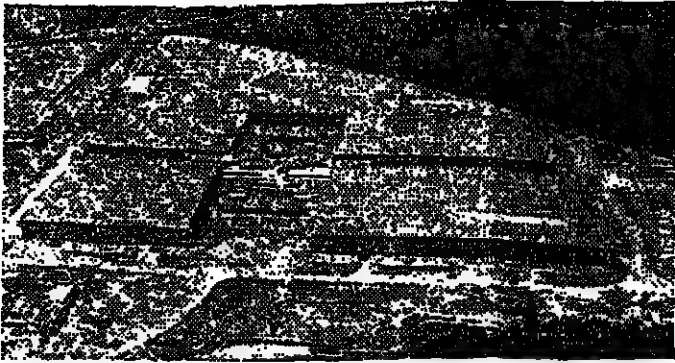
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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY VI

Key role of the merchant

"A VITAL link in a vital industry" is how Britain's builders' merchants like to describe themselves and few would argue with this description. In a sector which necessarily grows more sophisticated and invariably more complex each year, so the demands on the merchanting arm of the construction industry have increased.

There are an estimated 2,750 merchant outlets throughout the country providing a nationwide service and supplying annually products worth between £500m. and £800m. Their role is to-day much more than the straightforward supply of materials to contractors on site, with the modern merchant being called upon to participate in the construction process at every stage, from design to estimating right through to the completion of the contract. The merchant acts as the co-ordinator of all the materials and components which are required, entrusted with the vital task of ensuring that they are at the right place, in the correct quantities and at the right time throughout the contract.

While readily appreciating that their industry, like the construction sector as a whole, is largely at the mercy of far greater forces than they can hope to control, the merchants have nevertheless identified the areas which they believe could be better exploited particularly during difficult times and are making strenuous efforts to capitalise on them.

Top of the list is home improvement work, which in the past has provided merchants with a valuable market to compensate for the fall in new construction output but which now is falling away substantially as the rate of grant-aided improvements declines. The latest figures from the Department of the Environment showed that house renovation grants for an estimated 38,000 homes were approved in Great Britain in the third quarter of this year, compared with 56,400 in the same period of 1974. The NFEBPM has called for an immediate reversal of what it feels to be a disastrous situation that may help to destroy much of the progress it has made in promoting the improvement of sub-standard housing.

Experience

As the National Federation of Builders' and Plumbers' Merchants itself points out, the function of the builders' merchant requires a high level of experience, management skill and specialist knowledge and one which is essential to the efficiency of the total building team.

The essence of the merchant's job is to provide an efficient distribution system for vital materials and components, and to do this he has to hold large and comprehensive stocks that can be fed out as required. He must first understand how the construction sector works, the way in which architects, engineers, surveyors, builders and sub-contractors, manufacturers and merchants all co-operate.

The merchant must keep up to date with the latest developments in new products and construction techniques, as well as provide technical and cost information for planning and estimating. In a business dealing with so many different commodities, there is an overriding need for people who also have the financial ability to

provide sound costing, credit control and accountancy procedures, skills which at times like the present take on an added importance. Builders' merchants are among the first to see just how the industry is progressing and by monitoring their own sales have in the past provided a reasonably accurate picture of future patterns of output. As with every other set of statistics concerned with the building industry recently, their figures have not made pleasant reading, although there are now signs that the position has at last bottomed out.

Marketing

While the more traditional sources of business for the merchants continue to experience hard times, building maintenance is likely to prove another area in which the trade can make an extra marketing effort. Maintenance and repair costs to existing buildings in this country are currently calculated to be in excess of £1.8bn. a year, providing a major market for materials suppliers which may well expand considerably as companies and organisations are forced to make the best of what they have.

As with all other sectors of the construction industry, the merchants are also casting a careful eye over opportunities in overseas markets, where some U.K. distribution operations are already well in evidence.

Through European bodies, discussions have taken place on such subjects as standardisation, transport, harmonisation of systems, supply and demand, and other aspects which are of significance to the building industry in the enlarged European Economic Community.

The U.K. merchanting sector believes it is therefore well placed and prepared to take advantage of the changes

emanating from EEC entry. Changes there will certainly be for the building merchants of the 1980s. The introduction of computers on a wide scale — they are already well in evidence — seems inevitable if the merchant is to cope with the growing demands on his services. While the initial capital outlay will present itself as a major barrier in many cases, the eventual rewards should include a reduction of overheads and the development of information which will enable the productive trading staff of merchants to increase efficiency. Stock control will be improved, and customers' statements speeded up, while credit control should also be made easier. Credit facilities of the type presently offered to many customers seem, in any case, destined to be tightened up permanently in future, as a legacy of the present problems which manufacturers, suppliers, and their ultimate customers now confront. The system whereby merchants' customers are expected to pay by the last day of the month following delivery will probably be rigorously imposed.

In the past builders' merchants have regarded the house builder and smaller commercial contractor as their normal customers, from whom the majority of orders arise. More recently, however, the larger merchants in particular have shown an increased interest in the large contractors who are invariably national limited companies. To get a share of their business, merchant's profit margins have to be trimmed in most cases, but orders are often very large and placed not purely for one site or one delivery, but on a contract basis. This business has advantages in increasing rebates from certain suppliers or possibly even discounts, therefore increasing the profit made on all transactions with that particular supplier. The trend looks set to continue throughout the next decade and merchants will become more involved in certain materials which, at present, are not their domain.

The 1980s will not, however, present a picture in which everything changes. The construction industry is known for

its conservative approach to life and, indeed, many of the systems and services which surround it have formulated themselves a fairly efficient discipline. But, more than ever before, there will remain a growing need for a comprehensive and ongoing education programme to ensure that the merchanting operation keeps abreast of the latest developments in all the skills it encompasses.

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Michael Cass

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OF26

AMIDST THE current gloom surrounding Britain's economic situation and the trend in company profitability, one highly significant sector has still been turning in profits figures which many others must envy. The purveyors of good news are the plant hire companies; not all of them, of course, for there are probably some 2,000 active in this field in one way or another. But the last few weeks have seen a not insignificant number of those which are among the more important report an upward trend in their profits (at least, under present accounting methods)—changes along the lines of those recommended by the Sandilands Committee or taking inflation into account in some other way would undoubtedly present a somewhat different picture, but still one relatively more healthy than much of the rest of industry to-day and make encouraging forecasts about the future.

Among the more spectacular gains was that announced last month by Hewden-Stuart Plant, whose profits in the 26 weeks to August 3 were 25 per cent better than a year before at £1.59m. on a turnover of £16m. (up £4m.). Acquisitions between the two periods played a part in boosting the figure, but only a "modest" one according to the directors. Overall profits this year, the directors believe, should prove "satisfactory," and a pre-tax figure of £3.4m. compared with last year's £2.83m. has been suggested as the possible outcome.

Richards and Wallington, another major name in the business, notched up a pre-tax profit of £1.18m. (before a transfer of £815,000 to tax equalisation) on a turnover of £15.8m. against £1.12m. and £11.8m. (with £585,000 to tax equalisation) respectively in the corresponding six months of 1974. And, according to Mr. Roy Richards, chairman of the group, business at home "proceeds well."

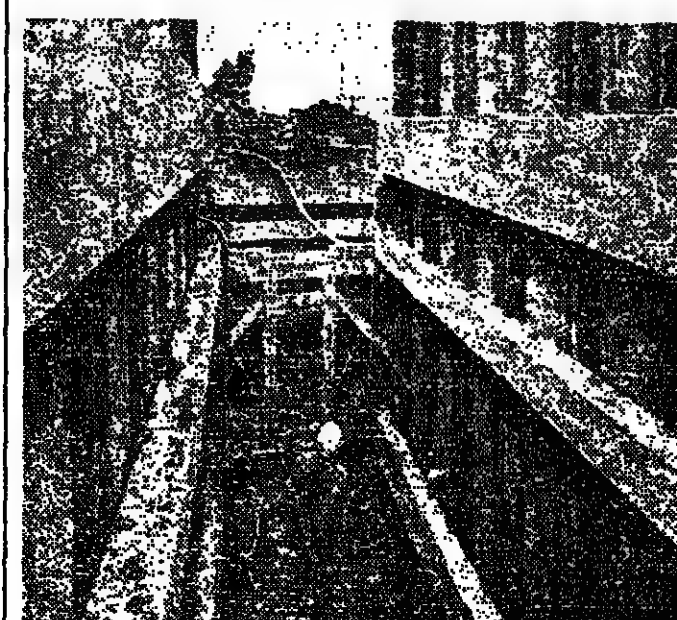
Then there is G. W. Sparrow and Sons, like Richards and Wallington a leading name in the crane hire field. Its first-half pre-tax figures were 36 per cent up on the same period last year with a profit total of £401,000 on a turnover of 40 per cent ahead at £3.09m., while Mr. A. W. Sparrow, the chairman, forecast a full year that would at the least show an improvement on 1974's record pre-tax profit of £834,000.

Short periods

Clearly, results of this sort are something of an enigma. Why is it that, when so much of British industry is doing so badly and has the odds so firmly stacked against it in present economic and political conditions, major companies in one particular field are apparently doing so well? For the answer, one has to look at plant hire's history. For the industry is one of Britain's youngest, and also one of the fastest-growing. Before the war, plant hire was virtually unknown in this country, as it is in so many other countries indeed, even to-day. Even at the beginning of the 1960s, plant hirers' annual turnover was only around £15m.; to-day the figure is perhaps nearer £450m. and still growing—and even allowing for inflation that is probably as big an increase as any sector of British industry can boast, other than a few specialist sectors.

The secret behind this is the

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY VII

Ways to save energy

THE CONSTRUCTION industry must be at the forefront of any campaign to conserve energy. Buildings are responsible for at least 40 per cent of the primary energy consumed in the U.K. and the proportion may be as high as 50 per cent, according to a recent study published by the Building Research Establishment.

Attention is often focused on the motor car with calls being made to lower speed limits or put petrol on ration, but the potential savings the construction industry can offer are far higher, buildings account for about three times as much energy as is used by the whole of the transport sector.

The BRE study makes the point that just by action on the existing housing stock to improve insulation of cavity walls and lofts, and changing the mix of fuels used for space heating, it ought to be possible to save about 6 per cent of the annual U.K. primary energy consumption. Direct savings would be worth around £3,900m. In addition to the improvement to the balance of payments and consequent benefits to the national economy.

The Government has been anxious to encourage the construction industry to raise standards and for new housing the Department of Environment has introduced regulations which will have the effect of roughly doubling standards of thermal insulation. Industry is also paying in-

Insulation

The National Economic Development Office report on energy conservation underlined the need for higher levels of insulation. In a normal house without insulation about 75 per cent of the heat input goes to waste. About a third escapes through the walls, more than a quarter through the roof.

The BRE report points out that for new houses the cost of better insulation can be small compared with the total cost of the house and could lead to energy savings that can

be fully justified on their economic return.

At 1973 prices, the report says the extra cost of providing 75mm (3 inch) roof insulation in a terraced three-bedroom house would be £12 to £15 more than for the usual 25mm of insulation. For the inner leaf of cavity walls, aerated concrete block would in many cases be as cheap as brick or clinker blocks.

The air cavity between the leaves of outer walls of a house can be filled with insulating material, and double glazing on a new house would cost between, say, £125 and £300. Weather stripping to reduce draughts can also make a contribution.

According to NEDO estimates the measures outlined above would cut energy consumption by between 25 and 30 per cent. In practice, however, savings are likely to be nearer 10 per cent, as householders tend to heat their homes to a higher temperature after insulation.

Cavity wall insulation has emerged as a boom sector in recent years but growth has been held back over the last few months because some local authorities have used the building regulations to prevent work going ahead.

Under the regulations cavity wall insulation is a structural alteration requiring a special relaxation of the rules in each case. However, the Department of Environment sent a letter to

local authorities at the end of last month saying special approval will not be necessary for "a significant proportion" of such work.

Exempted from the tight control are existing houses of up to three storeys, depending on the material used and the degree of exposure. The installer has to ensure that his work is covered by a certificate from the Agreement Board—the Government sponsored organisation which investigates and assesses materials used in the construction industry.

The Department of Environment says its initiative is intended to "help in the general drive for energy conservation by facilitating a process which, properly carried out with the right materials in the right circumstances, is a satisfactory and cost-effective way of improving thermal insulation."

The energy crisis has sparked off research projects through-out the world to see how buildings can be adapted to conserve less fuel, whether by making use of solar cells in the ceiling or windmills in the back garden.

Research

Probably the biggest research programme in this country into how housing can be adapted to the aim of energy conservation is being led by Dr. S. J. Leach, head of the building services and energy division at the BRE. In addition to the Royal Institution of British Architects own research staff, Dr. Leach is able to monitor progress made by independent schemes throughout the country and to co-ordinate information.

Among the most futuristic and best publicised projects under way is the one at Cambridge where architects, engineers and scientists are working on a house intended to

be completely self-sufficient in last month saying special approval will not be necessary for "a significant proportion" of such work.

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Plant hire profits

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

service that plant hirers offer to their customers, particularly in the construction industry which, taken at its widest meaning, is the sector with which hirers are most involved. Basically, plant hire saves the company making use of a great deal of money. Before it became such a generally accepted way of life in construction, companies had to buy all the equipment they needed, or might need. But, such is the nature of the industry, any particular item of plant might be required for only short periods at a time. For the remainder of its life, it stood around, depreciating expensively. Add, as the sophistication of available plant increased, this became something that companies simply could not afford.

Switching

With hired equipment, on the other hand, the builder has the particular item he requires—and pays for it—only when he requires it. But the hirers, by contrast, are able to make use of their plant pretty well constantly, switching it from site to site as and when needed.

This does not pay off just in terms of plant use. For the hirers' business is plant, and this means they are better able to maintain it and generally look after it than a company whose primary business is civil engineering or whatever. The sale does not just stop there, either. For there is also the question of manpower. And here again, hiring can offer some significant advantages, particularly, once more, as equipment has become more and more complex and the skills needed to operate it more and more specialised. In most cases, especially with construction plant, customers receive both equipment and the skilled men needed to work it. Training is expensive in any case and is doubly so when men may be using their dearly acquired

skills for only a small proportion of their highly paid time in the construction industry and working at unskilled or semi-skilled tasks for the remainder of it. Using plant hire eliminates this unnecessary expense, too.

These, then, are the factors behind plant hire's rapid growth. Yet it would be wrong to exaggerate its importance. For the biggest hirers still only have fleets considerably smaller in size than those of the top construction and civil engineering companies—a significant number of whom, indeed, also run plant hire operations of their own. And the industry's youth is shown in its structure, with only a handful of big companies at the top of the tree (the 50 largest hirers probably account for around 60 per cent of the £250m. or so tied up in plant, specifically for hiring) and many hundreds of smaller ones beneath them, most operating both in a very restricted area and with a very restricted range of equipment. None, indeed, is truly national in its coverage, despite the acquisitions and mergers seen in recent years—and virtually certain to continue—as the major groups have emerged.

This said, however, the fact remains that plant hire is of key importance in the building industry, not least as far as makers of construction and civil engineering plant are concerned. For the same factors as are behind plant hire's growth are behind the way the industry has emerged as something of a pacesetter where construction plant is concerned. Thus, it is no coincidence that the biggest tower crane currently operating in this country, a 500-ton Gottwald, is owned by a hirer (G. W. Sparrow), while another hirer, Scotts Cranes of Beeston, operates what is claimed to be one of the largest telescopic cranes in the world, the Gottwald 155, which has an overall tip height of 300 feet.

A key point in all this is that plant hire's attractions to the building industry—allowing reductions in expenditure on equipment and wages and generally improving cash flow—become all the greater when the building industry is in recession, as now. And this is one vital factor in the industry's continuing to go against the trend for the rest of U.K. activity. There are other things at work, of course, notably the level of business connected with North Sea exploration and

exploitation, which has been holding up well compared with other civil engineering activity. But basically, plant hire continues to do well when the rest of the construction industry is in recession—or at least for a time.

And here is the rub. For the industry has been here before, seeing something of a boom period while its customers suffered—and then suffered nastily in its turn. First, a recession means that builders themselves have still more equipment of their own standing idle, and are tempted to enter the hire field with it in a bid to reduce their losses and gain some return on their over-heads. And, second, the effects have to work through some time. When they do, the impact on an industry which has been doing well and expanding rapidly—and this means expanding its investment and, as a result, its equipment fleets—is sharp indeed. Last time around, many were the companies that either went to the wall or were swallowed up by their competitors. The process was aided by the near amateurishness of some operations—with charges held down to levels that were clearly uneconomic but allowed to remain there because of the sheer volume of the competition which had to be contended with. The key question now is whether this will happen again.

Mergers

For some of the smaller companies—perhaps many of them—the answer is almost certainly yes. But where the majors are concerned, the industry is in a far stronger position than it was, say, a decade ago. For the process of merger and acquisition that has gone on has given many of the companies a broader base than before. Large conglomerates have moved into the field, seeing their plant hire subsidiaries now help to subsidise their other activities hit by the economic recession in the expectation that those subsidiaries in turn will be able to weather the storm when it comes in the same way.

Others have moved with considerable success into overseas markets—Richards and Wallington, for example, in France, Grayston (BET) in the Netherlands and South Africa, and Greenham Plant in the Middle East—virtually creating plant hire industries where none existed before. And still others (and some of the same ones) have seized opportunities created by the North Sea to become active in a new market unrelated to construction's traditional cycles, even if it is one in which activity is now slowing down in the face of uncertainties created by Government policy—or lack of it—and the general economic climate. There have been moves into plant sales and distribution, both in Britain and overseas, as well.

Thus, the industry is undoubtedly coming up to a period which will be far from problem-free; many companies, indeed, must already be into it. But it has gained a valuable breathing space over much of the rest of British industry, and it is better equipped to cope with it than it was last time around. Casualties there will be, but plant hire in general seems set to go from strength to strength in any longer term view.

David Walker



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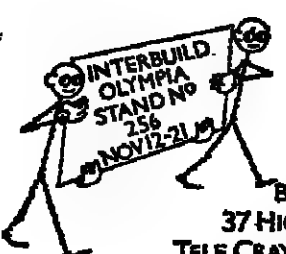
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THE BUILDING INDUSTRY VIII

Less work for architects

ONE OF the major casualties of the current recession in the construction industry has been the architectural profession, where work levels are now calculated to be at their lowest point for at least ten years.

By the early part of this year, new commissions being taken on were running at over 30 per cent. down on the level achieved a year earlier and although there are no statistics available to confirm the latest position, there are few people who do not imagine that the position has continued to deteriorate since that time.

Among the most sensitive of "early warning" systems for the construction industry, the architects knew very well that the downturn was on its way but the speed and magnitude of the drop involved has taken most by surprise. The last time the profession experienced a similarly sharp cutback was ten years ago and even then it took 18 months for the figures to fall to the extent that they did in just nine months during 1974. The slide in the production drawings figures has also been substantial but started later than the fall off in new commissions.

The country's 20,000-odd practising architects are naturally not only worried about the immediate repercussions of such a worrying situation—though they are harsh enough—but about much wider implications.

Many are worried about just how permanently the nation's all-important design resources will be affected by such a marked drop in activity levels, which threatens to shut down practices and consequently lose the skills which have taken many years to build up.

Capacity

It is only two years since the profession had more work on its hands, from both the private and public sectors, than it had ever experienced before and the problems were centred on finding the capacity to cope, rather than trying to keep well-tried, experienced design teams together. But for the vast volumes of work which did arise in 1973 and 1974, some of which simply had to wait, there

is little doubt that to-day the architects would be in even deeper trouble. For it is in many cases the work left over from the last period of high activity that has kept many of them active until now.

The fall in work levels has been throughout the construction sector, reflecting the general downturn in investment and building activity in all sectors of the economy. To date, it has been the private practice, most of them very small units, rather than the "in house" operation employed by a company or in local or central government, which has felt the downturn worst of all. But now, however, even the larger, more resilient operations are finding life difficult. The trouble is that their problems only serve to make those of the small, private practice even worse, as these invariably rely for a proportion of their business on work from hard-pressed public sector design departments.

This "mixed economy" in the design field has, according to the Royal Institute of British Architects, worked well in the past, with about half of all architects employed by the nation's 3,800 private practices and the remainder for an estimated 1,500 in-house departments. Such a combination has in the past been well placed to cope with the seemingly inescapable cyclical fluctuations in demand and output which inflict themselves upon the building sector. This time, however, there are fears that such is the length and depth of the current downturn in output that things might never be the same again.

Practices are laying off staff and retiring older people early and newcomers to the profession are finding it impossible to get employment, despite their hard-earned qualifications. As many as 1,000 newly qualified entrants join the architectural profession each year but the figure has now fallen significantly and with the architectural position in the professional salary scale apparently falling further out of line, potential recruits could not be blamed for choosing another field.

As with other associated industries and professions, the

architects feel that the continuing ups and downs can no longer be accepted as a way of life and the pressure is now on for a review of the way in which both the industry itself and the Government could improve the construction sector's longer-term outlook.

In common with the rest of the industry, it has been the policy of the RIBA in these circumstances to press not only for selective refutation to increase work levels—but for a more stable pattern of workflow to be achieved and maintained in the future.

As far as the RIBA is concerned, this means that the Government must accept that the overall management of the building industry's workload is a matter in which it must be closely involved. A far more responsible approach to regulating its workload and a better understanding of just how the building sector works is seen as a vital prerequisite to any long-

term solutions to the industry's problems.

The views of RIBA on the subject have been put quite bluntly to Mr. Anthony Crossland, Secretary for the Environment. The political leverage of the building industry compared with all other major industries in the country is negligible. This has hitherto undermined all attempts to encourage successive governments to accord special or even reasonable treatment to building.

Hard times

"It's problems have seemed no greater—often less—than those of dozens of other industries experiencing hard times. However, the extreme overheating of public sector building in 1973, which was itself almost entirely a consequence of direct and indirect Government action and a trigger to other inflation made very clear that the nationally damaging results of

prolonged lack of proper handling or regard to the implications for construction programmes of policies which happened incidentally to make significant demands on the industry."

But, for the moment, the architects are clearly as intent upon improving their immediate outlook to ensure that they have any reasonable future worth worrying about. Top of the list of suggestions already made with some force to the Government is that of a "moving shelf" of work, whereby design work on projects is carried on regardless of whether or not the projects involved have any slot in the building programme. In this way, say the architects, jobs can be maintained and drawings are available to be fed quickly into the production pipeline when required. The possible abortive fees incurred if these jobs never do see the light of day are, say the architects, likely to be very small compared with the inflationary effect that high demand

and limited resources may have later on.

One area where prospects do look bright is in markets overseas, where the reputation of British architects remains very high. But even here there has been criticism that while architects from other countries are jumping in to take early advantage of economic activity in certain developing areas, the profession in this country is still pondering over whether its code of conduct will permit it to play a full part in such ventures abroad.

Largely as a result of pressure from bodies like the RIBA, however, the Government has now established an exports advisory board which it is hoped will bring together the nation's design and construction resources to enable them to participate more effectively in the opportunities which are now arising in overseas markets.

Michael Cassell

effect and in July another 3.9 per cent. rise was introduced. This month's increase will add another 9 per cent. to the cost of a tonne of Portland Cement, putting its new price at about £18.70.

The recent figures from Rugby Portland Cement illustrate what has been happening. Although deliveries were well down, profits in the first half rose by 8 per cent. and third quarter figures are reported to show continuing improvement.

It is not the cement manufacturers alone who have made the best of a bad job. The brick producers too have witnessed a dramatic fall-off in demand and at one stage, earlier this year, the industry's stocks nearly reached 1bn. As with the cement manufacturers, however, the demand situation has now begun to pick up and while production remains fairly constant, stocks have been falling steadily and significantly.

The state of trade in 1974 forced London Brick to make around 2,000 workers redundant and the industry as a whole lost over 30 brickmaking plants during the year. Like the cement manufacturers, brick producers were faced with staggering increases in basic costs, and substantial price rises throughout the period were the inevitable result.

But, again like the cement sector, the outlook for bricks has taken a turn for the better, although no one is anxious to make too much of the apparent revival in fortunes. In August London Brick reported a substantial increase in half-yearly profits and said that the demand position had picked up to the extent that further expansion of output was possible.

The steady rise in the level of housebuilding activity is seen as the reason for the improved position and London Brick for one says that its stocks position is now back to normal. The company's healthy situation does, of course, to some extent reflect sizeable stock profits: nor has it had to bear the cost of running some of its high-cost manufacturing units which were closed when sales dropped.

One or two brick manufacturers have recently been expressing their faith in the longer term future by bringing new capacity on stream and showing the world they have invested in production plants which incorporate the very latest manufacturing techniques. Both Ibsstock and Redland are among producers in this category.

The problems which the brick and cement manufacturers have met are common throughout the

materials field, from timber and glass to plastics and aggregates—how to contain costs and to juggle business so as to accommodate lower volume sales. All expect the next 12 months to be a difficult period; some think worse than others.

The National Council of Building Material Producers said recently it expected the recessionary conditions to last well into next year and possibly to the end of 1976. The construction sector's output, in real terms, could well revert to the low levels of 11 years ago, the NCMBP warns.

A similar message came from the National Federation of Builders' and Plumbers' Merchants. Its president, Mr. Reg. Williams, says the outlook looked gloomy as the winter months approach. Income squeezed and public spending comes under tighter control, he adds: "Although it is tempting to think that the building slump has hit rock-bottom, we may not have felt the worst yet."

Overseas

Like everyone else in the construction world, material producers are having to take a closer and longer look at opportunities further afield, but with U.K. contracting and professional services show signs of expanding rapidly in overseas markets, trade in building materials does not seem to have recorded a similar level of success. Material exports are currently thought to be running at a creditable £300m. In the current year, but a significant proportion of this total is still accounted for by specialist constructional steelwork and they remain tremendous scope for further advances in this field.

The growing interest in foreign markets by British architectural practices could be a great deal to enhance the use abroad of U.K. building materials, and while direct export of many products does not in many cases present a vast proposition, the moves towards establishing overseas manufacturing operations and the spread of licensing agreements should provide a major boost for international sales.

There is no doubt that the next two years will quite likely be "make or break" for those who supply the materials to do the job. For those who supply the materials to do the job, the experience in dealing with major cyclical swings will stand the materials manufacturers in good stead but 1976 could prove to be the supreme test for many of them.

Michael Cassell

Materials suppliers

TO THE building material producers the problems of the past two years have been all too familiar. From a position of full output and steadily lengthening delivery times, they have once again witnessed a major downturn in construction output which has thrown most of their plans into reverse.

The abandoning or postponement of expansion programmes in favour of necessary rationalisation and redundancies has been the picture throughout many of the supplier industries, and once again manufacturers feel that their ability to cope with the next major upturn—whenever that may be—will have been seriously impaired.

Experiences during the present difficult times have differed substantially, but the suppliers generally reckon that it is about time greater attention was paid to organising a more stable flow of work for an industry whose

boom-slump cycle has become notorious and far more accentuated than in other comparable economies.

Among suppliers of major construction materials, the cement manufacturers have had what can only be described as a rather interesting two years. Having weaved their way carefully through a difficult period when the long-established common pricing agreement was outlawed by the Price Code, the manufacturers are once again operating in the style which suits them best and which, they emphasise, is in the best interests of their customers.

While sales to a stagnating industry have been falling throughout the past two years, an unprecedented wave of price increases has kept the industry's performance brighter than in many other sectors.

In 1974, deliveries slumped by around 12 per cent. compared

with the preceding year and production fell by over 2m. tonnes to under 18m. tonnes. The inevitable round of closures and redundancies followed.

Cement

By the beginning of this year, with no sign of an end to the construction slump and in fact every indication that it could get worse before it got better, cement manufacturers were privately predicting that deliveries this year could be down by as much as 10 per cent. on 1974. Their worst fears were not, however, confirmed and up to September last deliveries were running at around 6 per cent. below the previous year. Since then the situation has improved and are thought to be running a still further and deliveries now little over 5 per cent. down.

The industry is naturally heartened by any sign of an

improvement but there are few manufacturers who have yet ventured to say anything encouraging about 1976. Predictions vary but companies seem to be expecting a further fall of around 3 per cent. in deliveries next year.

But while sales drop, prices have continued to soar. Earlier this month the Cement Makers' Federation, which played a major part in getting the industry's common pricing agreement restored, announced another round of price increases, the sixth since May, 1974.

Most of last year's increases were, as for many other manufacturing industries, triggered off by massive increases in fuel costs. In 1974 customers faced price rises in May, September and December, raising the cost per tonne to nearly £18. In March this year, an additional 18 per cent. increase came into

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— BRIDGEND 57511

TELEX 49130

CHERTSEY, SURREY

— 093-28-60991

COLESHILL, BIRMINGHAM

— COLESHILL 63773

TELEX 338583

EXETER, DEVON

— 0392-75286

TELEX 42734

GLASGOW

— 041-774-2292

TELEX 77531

HATFIELD, HERTS.

— 070-72 62333

TELEX 22796

HAYDOCK, LANCS.

— 0942-75321

TELEX 67458

LEEDS, YORKS.

— 0532 537321

TELEX 557270

NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

— 089-424 2432

TELEX 53127

BEIRUT, LEBANON

— 381825

TELEX 21229

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A women's industrial revolution ahead

By JOHN ELLIOTT, Labour Editor

SEVEN weeks time, on the new Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) which the Government will set up during the next couple of months under the Employment Protection Bill. The full extent of women's rights will, therefore, be painlessly built up by case law, possibly necessitating a special Amendment Bill within a couple of years.

At the same time as industry starts to assimilate the possible implications of the new laws on women, it will also be grappling with the provisions of the Employment Protection Bill, also expected to gain Royal Assent this week. This Bill's provisions will be introduced over a longish period—perhaps as much as two years—in order to spread the cost of some of its provisions on subjects such as guaranteed weeks and maternity benefit. But, despite this lengthy timetable, some less costly provisions, such as unions recognition and arbitration rights, will be introduced quickly and a Central Arbitration Committee set up, linked to the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service. This will radically change the employment policies of some companies and is causing increasing concern among personnel managers about the increasing number of statutes encircling their day-to-day work.

The Equal Pay Act will be introduced by Mrs. Barbara Castle when she was Secretary for Employment and Productivity. Since it received the Royal Assent, employers have been gradually moving towards achieving full equal pay by the end of this year. The special many details intentionally vague. As a result, precisely where it is or is not of interest to employ someone, will for how much money, will for the country's network industrial tribunals to decide on appeals, being taken to

Partly in order to delay the increased costs for as long as possible employers were slow to move in the first couple of years, but now they have accelerated and there seems to be no sign of major problems. In 1970 many employers complained loudly about the cost of equal pay—forecasting that it would add up to 30 per cent or more to some company's wage bills. That figure looked astronomical at the time, but it strikes less horror now and few employers are making it an issue.

The basic difference between the two new pieces of legislation is that the Equal Pay Act deals with contractual matters—that is matters contained in individuals' contracts of employment, which will very often coincide with matters negotiated between unions and employers. The Sex Discrimination legislation, covering education and the provision of goods and services as well as employment, is involved with non-contractual, discretionary matters.

The first equal pay requirement, that men and women should be paid the same for "work of the same or broadly similar nature" is extremely vague, but basically covers work which does not contain any frequent differences of practical importance. This is intended to be fairly restrictive, but clearly is open to widely varying interpretations—especially in clerical employment where a clerk's job could lead to all sorts of problems because equal pay can straddle departments within associated establishments.

The second requirement is that women given equal rating under a job evaluation scheme must be treated equally—a provision which sceptics believe could lead to a lot of inequality through skilfully designed evaluation exercises. The third is that, from the day of implemen-

WHAT THE NEW LEGISLATION REQUIRES

EQUAL PAY ACT 1970

The same rate of pay and other conditions of employment should be paid to men and women who:

- (a) are doing the same, or broadly similar work for the same or an associated employer;
- (b) are doing jobs which, though maybe different, have been given an equal value under a job evaluation exercise;
- (c) receive a statutory arbitration award removing discrimination in a collective agreement, an employer-imposed pay structure, or a statutory wages order.

SEX DISCRIMINATION BILL

An employer must not discriminate on grounds of sex or marriage in:

- (a) access to jobs, including job advertisements;
- (b) opportunities for promotion, transfer, training or other benefits;
- (c) dismissal from employment—unless sex is a genuine occupational qualification for the job.

tion, when specific men's or women's pay rates should disappear, labour agreements specifically applying to men or women can be referred to the Industrial Arbitration Board (and subsequently to the Central Arbitration Committee when it is set up under the Employment Protection Bill). The Board will amend the agreement where necessary, by striking out the lower pay rate—so raising the women to the higher rate. This could prove expensive for employers and is intended to induce them to sort their agreements out first without the Board's intervention.

Individuals can complain of unequal pay to Industrial Tribunals—which are being expanded from an existing tribunal panel membership of 1,500 to up to 2,500 to cope with the work load—and then appeal to the proposed EAT. At the tribunal hearing it will be up to the employee to prove that she is doing equal work. Once

she has done this, an employer's only left-out is to prove there is a material difference (other than sex) such as length of service or age, which warrants different pay.

The sex discrimination legislation, backs up the Equal Pay Act and makes it much more likely to be effective because, by legislating against discrimination in employment, it should prevent employers shedding women now that they are to be more expensive to employ. It also makes it more difficult for an employer to keep men out of a certain job and so create an all-male workforce with no male pay rates to which to aspire. Without the sex discrimination legislation, the equal pay measure might have harmed rather than helped women, especially at a time of rising unemployment.

The current economic problems of industry may, however, accelerate the impact of the new laws. A lot of people are

losing their jobs at the moment and will be vying with each other for re-employment when the hoped for economic upturn comes. This could even lead to men trying to gain jobs hitherto held by women. Equally, women, faced with a shortage of house-keeping money, may be more aggressive in seeking work—especially when there has been a sharp drop in part-time employment.

The discrimination legislation covers action which might be "deliberate" or "word which is not clearly defined in recruitment, treatment while in a job, and the way you leave it, apart from death or retirement. Exceptions are laid down as "GOGs"—Genuine Occupational Qualifications—and apart from where these apply, a person's sex should be no barrier to employment, even if an occupation is usually single-sex.

Coal miners are specifically excluded, while the introduction of male midwives has been carefully circumscribed. Different GOGs also cover, for example, singers and actors, masseurs and lavatory attendants, those working on ships and remote construction sites, those in single sex prisons and hospitals, those on night shifts (under a Factories Act requirement which is now to be reviewed), and those who partly work abroad—say, as an engineer in Saudi Arabia—where women could not effectively do the job.

Complaints can be made through the industrial tribunals although, contrary to trade union hopes, the burden of proof will fall on the worker, who will have to prove discrimination instead of merely making an accusation against an employer.

There is also a new Equal Rights Commission, with very

wide powers, to "work towards new legislation by giving free- the elimination of discrimination" and able to initiate its own formal investigations, such as the miners) and then to encourage women to play a more active part in union affairs.

Opportunities

Many employers may nonetheless successfully ignore and by-pass the legislation, either through ignorance or through design. At the same time many male-oriented union officials may not be too energetic about pushing women's rights. Individuals themselves may not be too anxious, especially at a time of rising prices and increasing unemployment, to upset the stable employment conditions they already have. Without rigid "quota" systems, such as those to the U.S. where companies have to employ a certain percentage of women, it may also be easy for employers to design special criteria to keep either men or women off a certain job—and then to fix the wage rates accordingly.

Attitudes

Trade union attitudes will be important here. A TUC survey a few months ago showed that, although one-third of the 10m. members in TUC unions were women, they were under-represented at virtually every level of voluntary and full-time union office: in 62 unions replying to a TUC questionnaire, there were only 71 full-time women officials compared with 2,259 males. Believing this was due to general factors rather than positive discrimination, the TUC has advised unions to first to fall into line with the new climate.

The TUC has also taken two other significant steps. It has drawn up an "equal opportunities clause" to be inserted in labour agreements, and has circulated this to its unions—some sceptics say as much to generate some interest in the issue at grass roots level as to put pressure on employers. This clause commits the parties to the agreement to "promote equal opportunity in employment regardless of workers' sex, marital status, creed, colour, race or ethnic origins"—so anticipating further legislation in the racial field as well as dealing with sex discrimination. To deal with this broader front, the TUC has also set up an Equal Rights Committee. This holds its first meeting soon and will, TUC leaders hope, reflect a slow but steady change of view among members of the TUC general council in recent years on the need to help disadvantaged groups as well as the powerful.

But union leaders are very much aware that they are well ahead of the thinking of their members, whose brotherhood has been sorely strained when immigrants are in a position to take well paid and comfortable jobs and will now, almost certainly be so again when women have equal rights. Against this background, it remains to be seen how quickly industry becomes attuned to the new climate.

Vague

The problems, for both employers and unions will be compounded by the fact that the pieces of legislation have been extremely loosely drafted, and many details intentionally vague. As a result, precisely where it is or is not of interest to employ someone, will for how much money, will for the country's network industrial tribunals to decide on appeals, being taken to

Letters to the Editor

Squeezed at both ends

Professor G. Haselden.
In my job I walk a tightrope in trying both to draw able people into chemical engineering, with the rigorous rise that it involves, while on the other hand being fair to my existing staff. The two will be called upon to do, recently, I received a job in the form of a letter from a former student. I quote: "I spent the last ten years in the industry and during that time I have experienced considerable frustration with dogmatic union representatives and management in senior positions who could not, or would not, even see problems, let alone any sensible suggestions for their solutions. Of the two cases, the one that undoubtedly would be the most disturbing I have come to expect some degree of hostility from unions, but could not equate my own mind the fact that management would frequently not support the management of which I was a member, in times of crisis. This particularly applied to time at one organisation where I and the other plant managers on the site came to a conclusion that it was the stewards who were in charge of the factory and the management managed only with their permission. This situation led to it being intolerable to many of my colleagues both in technical department and plant management. The result was that the same time as I left three or four qualified chemical engineers went to work abroad, and that others left the company in droves in the U.K. I was lucky when I left. I was able to move one rung higher by becoming works manager at another plant. Here problem was nothing to do with unionism in fact relations in this respect were extremely cordial—but exclusively senior management. Rarely there any clear-cut policy decisions made, with the result the company seemed to be in a crisis in crisis both technically and also to some extent commercially. I could not understand this because company was small and active management were resident on site.

are increasingly making the task of middle management intolerable to the point of resignation. These facts must be faced. G. G. Haselden, Dept. of Chemical Engineering, University of Leeds, Leeds.

England and Kilbrandon

From Mr. J. Tripp.
Sir—The boundaries of the English regions—as drawn in the minority report in Kilbrandon—are purely arbitrary. They run without regard to tradition, cultural and economic affinity and thought vestigial memories of ethnic origin. Their only virtue can be to establish a principle and perhaps stimulate people with well developed provincial loyalties to further their solutions. Of the two cases, the one that undoubtedly would be the most disturbing I have come to expect some degree of hostility from unions, but could not equate my own mind the fact that management would frequently not support the management of which I was a member, in times of crisis. This particularly applied to time at one organisation where I and the other plant managers on the site came to a conclusion that it was the stewards who were in charge of the factory and the management managed only with their permission. This situation led to it being intolerable to many of my colleagues both in technical department and plant management. The result was that the same time as I left three or four qualified chemical engineers went to work abroad, and that others left the company in droves in the U.K. I was lucky when I left. I was able to move one rung higher by becoming works manager at another plant. Here problem was nothing to do with unionism in fact relations in this respect were extremely cordial—but exclusively senior management. Rarely there any clear-cut policy decisions made, with the result the company seemed to be in a crisis in crisis both technically and also to some extent commercially. I could not understand this because company was small and active management were resident on site.

But it is unreasonable to expect the programme makers to know more when last week the concern was the Middle East and next week it will be investment policy. The in-house resources for keeping abreast of issues of home and foreign policy are fragmented and far too weak.

The second point I wish to make is that the *Tonight* programme is broadcast too late for the convenience of many; I found many potential viewers of the *News* programme who had decided that viewing from around 10.30-11.00 p.m. was out of the question. If the governors of the BBC and the members of the Independent Broadcasting Authority judge that this country is in some kind of crisis—be it economic, social, political, moral, or a combination of these—they have yet to show that TV resources and programme planning in any way match up to the seriousness of the situation. Is it too much to expect at least an evening of convenient viewing time on all channels to be devoted wholly to serious issues?

Finally, it would be churlish not to note that in the last two years BBC TV has done much more than previously to try to open up issues of health policy. These remarks should be interpreted as an exhortation to the BBC, the IBA and the commercial companies to build on these foundations.

Peter Draper, Unit for the Study of Health Policy, Department of Community Medicine, Guy's Hospital Medical School, St. Thomas Street, S.E.1.

Elimination of smallpox

From Mr. A. Mackay.
Sir—I read, recently, that a campaign by the World of Health Organisation was being dedicated smallpox throughout the world, except for Bangladesh and an area in Ethiopia. Provided none of such emigrants are permitted to land in quarantine, why are so many of us in the United Kingdom and throughout the world, still required to obtain a vaccination certificate every three years if one wants to travel abroad. Mine is due for renewal soon.

I realise it is a nice added source of income for doctors, but it also means added attendances in overcrowded surgeries, and a job for a council employee to authenticate the doctor's signature. Has anyone seriously considered: "Are these two journeys to the doctor and the council offices really necessary?" A. G. A. Mackay, 37, Park West, Marble Arch, W.2.

Productivity techniques

From the Managing Director, Systemshare.
Sir—Mr. E. A. King (November 6) takes issue with my statement that existing productivity techniques are in need of further development. I agree that many techniques now exist but am far from satisfied that they leave no room for improvement. Certainly in the field of production management and control, in which my company is currently deeply involved, we see a real need for better and more realistic systems. What is important, however, is that I think we would both agree that the techniques are either available now, or could be made available fairly quickly. I fully accept his point that what

is really lacking is the will and the confidence to put them into effect. I. Christie, Pitlochry, Edinburgh.

Machine tool frustration

From the Production Director, Peter Brotherhood.
Sir—Mr. Mortimer (November 5), referred to the extended deliveries being quoted by the machine tool industry which is working to 30 per cent capacity. When order books are full everyone is secure and overtime and extra effort are readily expended. Quotations for delivery are given at these times based on the capacity of the factory working in this way. When order books shorten everyone begins to feel insecure, overtime is restricted on a usually arbitrary basis; the capacity of the factory, and particularly specialised sections of it, is reduced, and the delivery quotations already given become inappropriate. How does one persuade a person that he should work himself out of a job in the short term so as to secure his long term future? P. R. Browne, Lincoln Road, Peterborough.

Saving heat

From Mr. J. Sumner.
Sir—Mr. Byrne's letter (November 1) emphasises, very properly, the need for the Central Electricity Generating Board to maximise the energy available from each pound of fuel which it burns. He refers to the need to increase the energy output from 40 per cent, to 80 per cent of the energy originally available in the fuel. For at least 15 years I have been purchasing from the CEBG electrical energy which represents about 334 per cent of the energy in the fuel burned. By using a fully instrumented and monitored heat pump which provides energy equal to three times the value of the energy purchased and used in the electric motor which drives the heat pump I have been able, over this long period, to heat my home with 100 per cent of the heat originally available in the fuel burned by the CEBG to supply me with energy. Yet despite this 15 year open record, and despite the seriousness of our disease the waters of Abana and Pharpar are still preferred. John Sumner, 28, Camberley Road, Norwich.

Beer at £1.50 a gallon

From Mr. H. Cole.
Sir—We now know that milk can be cheaper than water. But it is realised just how expensive beer is? The price is now about £1.50 a gallon. Take away the duty and it still costs more than petrol—with its excise tax of 22½p and 26 per cent VAT. It is rather more than extraordinary that it should cost more to get a gallon of beer—made from home-produced ingredients and by an essentially simple process—into a drinker than a gallon of petrol—which has to be extracted and then put through a complex of refining and transport operations—into a car. Harvey R. Cole, 3, Clifton Road, Winchester.

To-day's Events

Prime Minister speaks at Lord Mayor's Banquet, Guildhall.
European Central Bankers begin two-day monthly meeting, Basle.
SEC Council of Agricultural Ministers begins two-day meeting, Brussels.
Mr. Peter Shore, Trade Secretary, continues visit to Mexico.
Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, Opposition leader, speaks at local Conservative Party rally, Fairfield Hall, Croydon.
Junior doctors' ballot papers due to be returned.
Junior doctors in North-West hospitals begin overtime ban.
Sir William Batty, president, Society of Motor Manufacturers, speaks at Scottish Motor Show dinner, Glasgow.
William Tyndale School inquiry continues, County Hall, S.E.1.
PARLIAMENTARY BUSINESS
House of Commons: Debate on foreign affairs. Airports Authority Bill, second reading. Compensation for Limitation of Prices (Post Office) Order. House of Lords: Policyholders Protection Bill, consideration of Commons amendments. Commons amendments. Community Land Bill, third reading. Wholesale price index (October). Hire purchase and other instalment credit business (September). Retail trade (September—final).

COMPANY RESULTS
Arrow Engineers (half-year). Lucas Industries (full year). Rothchild Investment Trust (half-year).
COMPANY MEETINGS
See Week's Financial Diary on page 26.
EXHIBITIONS
Mr. Elliot Richardson, U.S. Ambassador to Britain, and Lord Goodman, chairman, Newspaper Publishers Association, open American Printing and Graphic Arts Exhibition, U.S. Trade Centre, 4-5, Langham Place, W.1. Automated Production Exhibition and Electrical Engineering Exhibition open, Belle Vue, Manchester.
International Caravan and Camping Show continues, Earls Court, Scottish Motor Show continues, Kelvin Hall, Glasgow.
OPERA
Royal Opera production of Un ballo in maschera, Covent Garden, W.C.2, 7.30 p.m.
MUSIC
Viktor Seew gives piano recital of works by Beethoven, Bartok and Ravel, St. Lawrence Next Jewry, Guildhall, E.C.2, 1 p.m.
London Woodwind Quintet plays works by Dutilleul, Arnold, Barber, Durko and Taffanel, Purcell Room, S.E.1, 8 p.m.

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COMPANY NEWS

Fitzwilson sees heavy fertiliser losses

CURRENT indications are that 1975-76 is going to be a most difficult year for the Fitzwilson group, with the dominant influence on results being the fertiliser division, the directors state.

That division is likely to incur heavy losses. Plants in Dublin and Cork have been out of operation since mid-July. It is hoped to have both back in production shortly but this is dependent on large-scale redundancies being agreed with the relevant unions. "This scale of demanning is essential if economic operation is to be achieved."

There is reasonable hope that demand for fertilisers on the Irish market will show a distinct improvement. However, there appears to be little or no potential as regards exports.

The other main divisions in Ireland continue to experience very difficult trading conditions. While the construction side is unlikely to show some advance it is unlikely that the others will show any improvement on their performance in 1975. In contrast the pharmaceutical division in the U.K. is continuing to make strong headway.

The U.S. associate, National Mine Service Company, continues to go from strength to strength and is expected again substantially to increase its contribution to the group.

The directors stress, however, that while the short-term outlook is bleak, the group has a solid foundation, is quoted in terms of funds of £20.32m, if quoted in terms of assets at market value.

Total borrowings will be reduced during 1975-76 to ensure a sound base from which to exploit the upturn in the Irish economy when it takes place.

As reported on October 18, 1975, profit for the year ended June 30, 1975, contracted from £3.46m, to £1.71m, and the dividend is set at 3.25p (5.5p).

Despite adverse factors, the group made outstanding progress in the U.S. and its trading subsidiaries also recorded satisfactory performance. The benefits of these trading results, however, were more than offset by a rise in interest charges.

The fall in output to the year was exacerbated by a severe drop in volume demand for phosphate and potash fertilisers in the Irish market, and by a belated and unexpectedly substantial collapse in the previously buoyant export market for these products.

The directors intend repaying the outstanding £30,835 of 4½ per cent debenture stock at par.

Meeting, Dublin, December 1 at noon.

See Men and Matters Page 14

No Kynoch dividend

Woolen cloth manufacturers, G. and G. Kynoch reports an increased pre-tax loss of £85,407, against £33,358, for the year to August 31, 1975, at midway the loss was £40,581 compared with profits of £39,594.

Full year turnover fell from £26,325 to £25,570. The loss for 1975-76 was struck after an exceptional wool stock provision of £59,148.

After a tax credit of £28,913 (£7,287), the loss per 25p share for 1975-76 is shown as 7.5p (5.3p). There is no dividend against a single interim payment of 1p net.

The company has continued to suffer from a continued and world-wide depressed level of demand for wool products, say the directors, and prospects, although an early recovery are not yet sufficiently encouraging to enable them to recommend a final dividend.

It is hoped, however, that by next April when the half-year results should be announced, there will have been a sufficient upturn in orders from export customers, on whom the company largely depends, for the payment of an interim to be considered.

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S. Casket confidence dampened

Future results of clothing manufacturers, distributors and retailers, S. Casket (Holdings) will be dependent on the company getting its deliveries from the Far East and whether or not its new U.S. manufacturers can produce sufficient quantities to meet demands at competitive prices, chairman Mr. P. Casket tells members of his annual report.

He says that it is not possible to make any concrete forecast of profits for the current year but sales to date are running above last year's record levels and the order book stands at an all-time high.

"We were certainly hopeful of having an extremely good first six months' profits, but this forecast was in September affected by yet another change in the legislation relating to imports from the Far East," he adds.

As reported on October 18, pre-group profit for the year to June 30, 1975, contracted from £0.21m, to a record £0.91m. The dividend total is effectively raised from 1.648p to 1.754p net.

Caution at F.C. Finance

In his statement accompanying the first half 1975 results of F.C. Finance, Mr. A. Sugden, the chairman, says at this point in the second half the general economic situation is still causing activity in the consumer credit field to remain at a low level.

For this same reason, group commitments, particularly in the housing and property markets, are also not being extended for the present.

But steps are being taken to improve the administrative controls over new business and collections and to strengthen the staff in readiness to take advantage of the opportunities that will arise when business returns to more normal levels, he declares.

As known group pre-tax profit for the half year decreased from £0.72m, to £0.57m, and payment of an Ordinary has been deferred until the year's results are known.

Funds employed decreased from £22.49m, to £20.17m, after deducting current liabilities, other than borrowed money, of £0.82m, (£1.03m.) and unrealised finance charges of £3.17m, (£5.37m.). They include loans £19.32m, (£21.2m.) and hire purchase and other instalment credit accounts £28.53m, (£25.89m.).

Acceptances total £3.9m, (£2.6m.), amounts advanced by the company to subsidiaries £19.92m, (£10.75m.), and deposits £22.1m, (£21.21m.).

First half (to September 30, 1975) pre-tax profit of P. & A. and subsidiaries of £14,983, (£14,983), from £24,759 to £14,983, the figure for the year to March 31, 1975, is £14,983, (£14,983).

B. S. Whiteley setback

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Guildhall Property outlook

DESPITE VARIOUS difficulties Guildhall Property Company expects current year profit to be sufficient to pay a maximum permitted dividend and to increase the carry forward.

The chairman, Mr. R. W. Diggins, emphasises that the outlook for industrial property at present is not good and there are no grounds for genuine optimism. The climate for industrial investment does not exist, he adds, and he sees no reason to expect an early change. However, at end June all the group

properties were fully let. Rent for the year to June 30, 1975, was some £110,000 net at £62,000. Unaccounted funds in hand are held on short-term deposit at the current high rate of interest and are ready, at short notice, to take advantage of any suitable investment opportunity.

As reported on October 24, group pre-tax profit for the year ended June 30, 1975, increased from £33,706 to £410,853 and the dividend is raised from 1.87p to 1.985p. The company is close.

Group properties appear in the balance sheet at £4.71m, (£4.63m.). The directors are of the opinion that a formal valuation would serve no useful purpose in the continuing difficult conditions. The sale of any substantial part of the property is not contemplated, it is stated.

Alnott London Properties holds 3.4m. Ordinary shares of the company and The Chase Charity, of which Mr. A. Ramsey, a member of the management council, held 1m.

Scottish Utd. Investors progress

GROSS REVENUE for the nine months ended September 30, 1975, of Scottish United Investors increased from £2,031,574 to £2,137,435, after £1,555,947, against £1,504,774, for six months.

Net revenue (after management expenses, depreciation and loan interest and tax) for the nine months was £383,926, against £377,515.

The net asset value of the 25p Ordinary shares based on market values of investments and after deducting prior charges at par, was £57.64m, (£54.62m.) and the net asset value per share 51p (49p).

Where applicable, the dollar premium of 54½ per cent, on September 30, has been added to the value of investments and unaccounted funds. The amount added is £13.04m, (£8.83m.).

FT Share Information Service

The following securities have been added to the Share Information Service appearing in the Financial Times:

Empire Plantations and Investments (Section: Teas-India and Bangladesh); Single Holdings (Section: Teas-India and Bangladesh).

Consolidated Plantations group

Consolidated Plantations states that the following wholly-owned subsidiaries of the company were placed in voluntary liquidation on November 1:

Merliman Pegoh, Perak (O) Palms, Trail Ayr Rubber Estates, Tennantaram Palm Oil, Consolidated Malay Rubber Estates, Prais Rubber, Craigieles Rubber Plantations, and Consolidated Salsak Rubber Estates.

Wilkinson Sword

Wilkinson Sword GmbH reports that in the year ended March 31 last rose to DM40.6m, from DM37.5m, in the previous year.

More Company News Page 28

DESPITE VARIOUS difficulties Guildhall Property Company expects current year profit to be sufficient to pay a maximum permitted dividend and to increase the carry forward.

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Net revenue (after management expenses, depreciation and loan interest and tax) for the nine months was £383,926, against £377,515.

The net asset value of the 25p Ordinary shares based on market values of investments and after deducting prior charges at par, was £57.64m, (£54.62m.) and the net asset value per share 51p (49p).

Where applicable, the dollar premium of 54½ per cent, on September 30, has been added to the value of investments and unaccounted funds. The amount added is £13.04m, (£8.83m.).

FT Share Information Service

The following securities have been added to the Share Information Service appearing in the Financial Times:

Empire Plantations and Investments (Section: Teas-India and Bangladesh); Single Holdings (Section: Teas-India and Bangladesh).

Consolidated Plantations group

Consolidated Plantations states that the following wholly-owned subsidiaries of the company were placed in voluntary liquidation on November 1:

Merliman Pegoh, Perak (O) Palms, Trail Ayr Rubber Estates, Tennantaram Palm Oil, Consolidated Malay Rubber Estates, Prais Rubber, Craigieles Rubber Plantations, and Consolidated Salsak Rubber Estates.

Wilkinson Sword

Wilkinson Sword GmbH reports that in the year ended March 31 last rose to DM40.6m, from DM37.5m, in the previous year.

H. Smith turns in £239,000

GROUP PROFIT, before tax, of H. Smith amounted to £239,000 for the year to June 30, 1975, against a forecast of not less than the previous year's £213,190. At the 25 weeks' stage profit was down from £102,437 to £84,183.

Reflecting a substantially reduced tax charge stated earnings per 10p share for the year increased from 1.57p to 3.07p. The dividend is raised from 0.395p to 0.394p net with a final of 0.164p net.

Directors' remuneration includes £7,000 compensation for loss of office.

Meeting, Sheffield, November 27 at 12.30 p.m.

Aurora growth policy

ALTHOUGH IN the year ended June 30, 1975, Aurora Holdings (general engineers) effectively sustained its trend of improved profits and cash flow, "we are by no means satisfied," says the chairman Mr. R. Atkinson.

The intention is to pursue the policy of strengthening the group by planned organic growth, rationalisation, and improved organisation. In addition the directors continue to seek suitable acquisitions and to improve the reliability of earnings by export and possibly further overseas involvement.

"We attach great importance to sustaining cash flow and to an improvement in both the quantity and quality of assets," Mr. Atkinson states.

At June 30, 1975, net tangible assets had increased from £1.58m, to £2.55m, with borrowings halved to £1.9m.

There has been a significant improvement in liquidity resulting from the rights issue, trade investments realised, the sale of a steel stockholding department and certain small and unrequired properties of the company. There was a £1.91m, increase in cash

resources, compared with £1.58m, decrease.

Group profit for 1974-75 came to £138m, (£137m.) as reported on October 3 with the 0.78p (0.67p) dividend. Adjusting for inflation the profit is £1.7m, and total equity interest £3.54m, (£2.57m, historical).

Nelson David returns to profit

Vehicle retailing and repair group Nelson David has shown a profit of £23,381 for the half-year ended September 30, 1975. All subsidiaries were in profit that if the trend continues during the winter the company's position at March 31 will improve accordingly, the directors say.

In the comparable half year a loss of £22,251 was sustained; and this had been increased to £123,500 by the 3-7-74 year end.

Interest charges will be reduced substantially by negotiations for the disposal of the remaining freehold property in London are concluded. Land at Wrexham purchased in 1972 for £20,000 has been sold for £30,000; this will further reduce borrowings.

RESULTS AND ACCOUNTS IN BRIEF

ACORN SECURITIES—Gross revenue £44,590 and payment to holding company for group profit £10,800 (£12,051). Fixed assets £222,257, due from holding company £158,781, (£150,241). Net current assets £235,793 (£111,515). Chairman's statement: "The year has been a successful one for the company. The first quarter of current year has shown a marked improvement in the company's performance. The second quarter has shown a further improvement in the company's performance. The third quarter has shown a further improvement in the company's performance. The fourth quarter has shown a further improvement in the company's performance. The year has been a successful one for the company. The first quarter of current year has shown a marked improvement in the company's performance. The second quarter has shown a further improvement in the company's performance. The third quarter has shown a further improvement in the company's performance. 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Businessman's Diary

U.K. TRADE FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS

Date	Title	Venue
Current	Indian Cycles and Components (tel. Nov. 21)	23 Cork Street, W.1
Current	Env. Design at St. Katharine-Tower (tel. Jan. 3)	Design Centre, S.W.1
Current	Intl. Caravan & Camping Show (tel. Nov. 18)	Earls Court
Current	Scottish Motor Show (tel. Nov. 15)	Kelvin Hall, Glasgow
Today	Printing Equip. and Graphic Arts Ex. (tel. Nov. 14)	U.S. Trade Centre, W.1
Today	Automated Production Exhibition (tel. Nov. 14)	Belle Vue, Manchester
Today	Electrical Engineering Exhibition (tel. Nov. 14)	Belle Vue, Manchester
Nov. 11-13	Shelford Antiques Fair	Falmer Hall
Nov. 11-14	Traffic Engineering & Road Safety Exbn.	Metropole Centre, Brighton
Nov. 11-14	Home Improvement and Leisureline Exbn.	Olympia
Nov. 12-14	Intl. Building and Construction Exbn.	Harrington Exbn. Centre
Nov. 14-15	British Book and Shoe Inst. Exhibition	Exbn. Centre, Harrington
Nov. 23-28	Camping, Trades Exhibition	Mount Royal Hotel, W.1
Nov. 23-27	Wholesale Buyers' Gift Fair	Celanes House, W.1
Nov. 25-27	B.F.F. Fashion Fabrics for 1976	Royal Hort. Halls, S.W.
Nov. 25-30	International Ski Show	Earls Court
Dec. 1-6	Royal Smithfield Show	Olympia
Dec. 2-6	International Woodworking Industries Exbn.	Olympia
Dec. 3-7	Custom Car Show	Olympia

OVERSEAS TRADE FAIRS AND EXHIBITIONS

Date	Title	Venue
Current	Do-It-Yourself Exhibition (tel. Nov. 11)	Hong Kong
Current	British Engineering and Tech. Exbn. (tel. Nov. 16)	Paris
Current	Intl. Photo. Cinema and Optical Ex. (tel. Nov. 16)	Paris
Nov. 11-14	Educational Equipment Exhibition	Tokyo
Nov. 11-15	British Export Handicrafts Exbn.	Amsterdam
Nov. 11-16	Intl. Maritime Exhibition-EUROPORT	Florence
Nov. 15-17	Italian Fashion Fair	Genoa
Nov. 15-23	International Wines & Spirits Exhibition	Frankfurt
Nov. 18-21	International Clothing Textiles Exhibition	Paris
Nov. 20-23	International Building Exhibition	Hong Kong
Nov. 22-Dec. 1	Hong Kong Diamond Fortnight	Basle
Dec. 1-4	Swiss Furniture Fair	New York
Dec. 1-4	Chinese Industry Exhibition	Amsterdam
Dec. 11-17	International Caravan Show	Amsterdam

BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT CONFERENCES

Date	Title	Venue
Today	Urwick Man. Marketing Management (tel. Nov. 24)	Slough, Bucks.
Nov. 11-12	Bus. Ind. Trng.: How to make Waste Pay	Caff. Royal, W.1
Nov. 11-12	Financial Times and the Bankers: Offshore Financial Centres	Nassau
Nov. 12	Inbucan/AIC: Relocation or Dislocation	Financial Times Cinema
Nov. 12	Palmer 78: Materials Handling	May Fair Hotel, W.1
Nov. 12-15	Strategic Man. Integrated Marketing Seminar	Royal Bath, Bath
Nov. 17	Inbucan/AIC: Housing and Safety at Work Act	Financial Times Cinema
Nov. 17-18	Graham & Trautman: Winning Bus. in Arab Markets	London
Nov. 17-18	Man. Trng. Cons. Senior Managers in Action	Leicester
Nov. 17-21	P-E Cons. Group: Leadership in Management	Exham, Surrey
Nov. 18	Arabian Mark. Research: Selling to Arabia	Cutlers Hall, Sheffield
Nov. 18	Hemley Centre: U.K. Economy and Stock Market	Carlton Tower Hotel, W.
Nov. 18-20	Management Science: Financial Models	Excelesior Hotel, Heathrow
Nov. 18	NEDU: Strengthening Clothing Industry	Café Royal, W.1
Nov. 18	Asian Certified Account: Current Taxation	Portman Hotel, W.1
Nov. 18-20	Euro. Study Conf.: Labour Relations Law	Connaught Rooms, W.C.2
Nov. 18-21	Frank Jenkins: Planning PR Campaigns	Manchester
Nov. 20	Fleiden Hse: Taxes, Prices, & Profit Measurement	Post House Hotel, Manchester
Nov. 21	Chem. Recovery Assn.: Cost and Waste Recovery	3, High Road, Nottingham
Nov. 21	Harry Mitchell: Work Measurement	Burlington House, W.1
Nov. 25	Aslib: Energy, Transport and Planning	Norfolk Gdns, Htl., Bradford
Nov. 25	Inst. of Works Managers: Industrial Safety	Royal Garden Hotel, W.8
Nov. 25	Inst. Studies: Capital Transfer Tax & Private Bus.	Imperial Hotel, W.C.1
Nov. 25-27	IPM: Job Analysis	Canook, Staffs.
Nov. 25-28	Computer Power: Operations Supervision	London Hilton, W.1
Nov. 26	Staniland Hall: Replacement Cost Accounting	Portman Hotel, W.1
Nov. 26-27	Rudi Weissweiler: Industrial Planning	Royal Garden Hotel, W.8
Nov. 28	Inv. Bulletin: Here Comes Tomorrow, Part I	Emm Lane, Bradford
Nov. 28-Dec. 5	Bradford University: Industrial Marketing	Copenhagen
Dec. 1-2	Financial Times, Berlingske Tidende, Helsingin Sanomat, Norwegian Journal of Commerce and Shipping and Svenska Dagbladet: The Private Sector in Tomorrow's Economy	Heaton Mount, Bradford
Nov. 1-3	Bradford Univ.: Corporate Planning in Practice	Royal Lancaster Hotel, W.2
Dec. 3-4	Financial Times: Third World Insurance Conference	Grand Hotel, Eastbourne
Dec. 3-5	BACIE Nat. Conf.: Trends in Training	Management House, W.C.2
Dec. 4	BIM: Legal Protection for Employees	Hong Kong
Dec. 4-5	Financial Times: Here Comes Tomorrow, Part II	Royal Garden Hotel, W.8
Dec. 5	W. L. Scott: Effective Office Management	Kuala Lumpur
Dec. 5-12	Financial Times: Stabilising Commodity Prices	Connaught Rooms, W.C.2
Dec. 6-9	Hull C.C.: Development Opportunities in Hull	

WEEK'S FINANCIAL DIARY

The following is a record of the principal business and financial engagements during the week. The Board meetings are mainly for the purpose of considering dividends and official indications are not available whether dividends concerned are interim or final. The sub-dividend shown below is based mainly on last year's time-table.

<p>COMPANY MEETINGS</p> <p>British Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Petroleum Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Telecom Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Overseas Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Petroleum Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Telecom Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Overseas Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Petroleum Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Telecom Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Overseas Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Airways Trust Debs. 2 and 2-1/2 p.m. (George A.J. 5.50)</p> <p>British Petroleum 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NEWS ANALYSIS—TRAWLERSMEN

Fish industry's Catch 22

By STEWART DALBY

IN THE early hours of last Wednesday morning, an Icelandic trawler, the third in three weeks, slipped into the new dock at Hull.

As the crew faded into the town, the "bobbies" or dock workers quickly and cheerfully unloaded the "Hardbauck" beneath arc lights, using the old-fashioned basket method, to catch the early morning fish auctions on the quayside.

One wonders whether in a couple of weeks' time if there is a new cod war between Britain and Iceland, the men of Hull, Grimsby, Fleetwood and other deep sea ports, will be quite so well disposed towards their Nordic counterparts.

The successful implementation by Iceland of its unilaterally-imposed 200 mile limit could be disastrous for Britain's deep-sea fishing industry which is already fast disappearing.

The agreement between Britain and Iceland over offshore fishing rights which runs out on November 18 is complicated by the wide issue of 200 mile limits. Most countries probably accept that these new economic zones must come, to look after oil and mineral rights, as well as to protect fish.

EEC pond

In theory Britain should welcome the fishing limits. Compared with our Common Market partners the U.K. would have a lot of fishing territory. It has been estimated that with 200 mile limits and median lines elsewhere, Britain would get 96 per cent of the EEC "pond". There are still a lot of fish around our shores.

The problem is that they are not the kind of fish that we want to eat. If we were mackerel or herring-eaters, everything would be fine. But the British housewife likes cod, with haddock, a poor second and plaice an even poorer third.

Of the 887,000 tons of fish landed in Britain last year (probably around 85 per cent landed by British ships) well over half was derelict fish (or fish that eat off the ocean's floor). Most of that half was cod—which originates well outside any 200-mile limit.

So, barring any overnight changes in market taste, there will have to be deals.

Norway, for example, which catches fish for industrial uses whereas we are almost totally a food fish market, takes something like 184,000 tons of herring and mackerel from our waters. Iceland itself pulled out 84,000 tons of mackerel and herring last year. So in exchange for ice-

land's cod (we caught an average 130,000 tons a year in the past two years) Iceland could fish 25,000 tons of our mackerel.

If there are no agreements then, as a trawler owner said, "we might as well pack up to-morrow." In other words, 99 per cent of the trawlers or "fishers" would have to be laid up or scrapped. This is virtually all of Britain's distant water—as opposed to middle-distance-water—fleet.

There is simply nowhere else for them to go in the short term. There are cod in the North Sea but quota arrangements limit our share to 84,000 tons. There is plenty of cod and haddock in the Barents or "White Sea," but the U.K. quota under the North East Arctic Fisheries Commission is 98,000 tons a year, and Britain's 40 freezer trawlers easily gobble most of this up, leaving little for the freshers.

The Faroes are out because of our 17,000-ton quota a year. The North-West Arctic is too far and there are not enough fish around to justify the expense of the trip.

Of course, the ships could be diverted to mackerel, and one big ship, the Callard, did make a voyage recently around the Isle of Man and off Falmouth. But not surprisingly, inshore fishermen on the south and south-west coasts dislike the huge factory ships operated mainly by the Russians which "hoover" up the ocean beds fishing for anything and everything.

For the distant water freezer trawlers at least it has to be Iceland, and even then the margin between profit and loss is becoming increasingly narrow.

At present there are 362 distant and middle distance deep-sea trawlers working out of British ports in 70s. A quarter of these are 40 freezer trawlers, ten years ago there were 1,000 although they were not the same kind of vessels. The industry has been savagely hit by a combination of soaring costs and weak demand.

Fuel is not the only cost to have risen steeply. Gear has gone up 200 per cent in two years. Wages have also risen

sharply (a skipper can earn £20,000 a year, a deck hand £5,000).

According to one owner, it costs £1,400 a day to keep a trawler out. The average trip to Iceland is 21 days, so there would not be much change from £30,000 on operating costs alone.

To cover this, with cod fetching £20 a kit (ten stone) as it did last week, the catch would have to be 1,500 kits at least. Ships do catch that amount, but the average has been nearer 1,200 kits recently. Of course if the price would just creep back up to the £24 to £26 of early last year the trawlers would not have to catch so much.

More trawlers are certain to go out of business. The Government has given £9m. this year in operating subsidies and has now said there is no more to come. The nicest thing I heard Mr. Fred Peart, the Minister of Agriculture, called in Hull was "wishy-washy."

It seems unlikely that by next March there will be more than 300 trawlers left.

Few votes

Perhaps the answer is that there are only 8,000 deep-sea fishermen and that it is not much of an industry. There are only 18,000 fishermen of all kinds in Britain, and together with related industry probably a work force all told of around 80,000.

According to one industry spokesman, "In cyclical terms with dependents, this is only 0.25m. votes at the next general election. We are not exactly in the car workers' league."

The deep-sea fishermen's best argument is not the starvade one that they have always fished Iceland but the import savings one. If Britain did not catch its own cod, who would sell it to us? Probably Iceland. Would Iceland, because its industry is subsidised and ours had to be, sell it to us cheaper? Probably not. Iceland would have a very strong market; why should they price themselves unrealistically?

APPOINTMENTS

NatWest's Europe chief executive

Mr. Eric Riddell has been appointed chief executive of NatWest's European operations. Mr. Riddell, 48, is a director of WESTMINSTER BANK and of INTERNATIONAL WESTMINSTER BANK. He succeeds Mr. Dennis Banyan, who becomes senior executive vice-president at the new North American executive office, New York.

by H. Clarkson (Insurance Holdings).

Mr. David Austen (finance director) has become deputy managing director of COLSTON APPLIANCES. He hands over the senior executive vice-presidency of the new North American executive office, New York, to Mr. John Freeman, formerly general manager of that company.

Mr. Campbell Adamson, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, has been appointed a vice-chairman of the NATIONAL SAVINGS COMMITTEE FOR ENGLAND AND WALES.

Although the CBI has been represented on the committee for many years, this is the first time that its director-general has accepted an office. Mr. Len Murray, general secretary of the Trades Union Congress, is a vice chairman of the committee, as were his two predecessors at the TUC.

Mr. Christopher P. King, president of the British Association of Manufacturers, has been elected to the Board of STANDARD OIL COMPANY (OHIO).

Mr. Robert D. Bailey has been appointed senior regional officer for FIRST NATIONAL CITY BANK in the U.K., Republic of Ireland and Scandinavia. Mr. Bailey was formerly senior officer for the bank in Italy and Mexico.

Mr. Walter McKinley has been appointed managing director of HADEN ROCKALL MAIN- TENANCE and will be based at the London office.

Mr. Hamilton Duckworth has been appointed head of the BBC Arabic Service to succeed Mr. Charles McClelland who, as already announced, becomes controller BBC Radio 1 and 2.

Mr. William E. Kenrick has been appointed chairman of the Committee of the Guardians of the Standard of Wrought Plate at the BIRMINGHAM ASSAY OFFICE. He succeeds Mr. H. B. Yates. Mr. Kenrick, who is chairman of Archibald Kenrick and Sons, has also been appointed to the committee of the British Hallmarking Council as one of the two representatives of the Birmingham Assay Office.

Mr. John R. Morris has been appointed chairman of CAMPBELL'S SOUPS and vice-president Europe, Campbell's Soups International, in succession to Mr. John M. Lindley, who is returning to the U.S. as president of Campbell's Soups International and vice-president, international, of Campbell Soup Company. Mr. Morris was previously vice-president, marketing, of Campbell Soup Company, and president of Champion Valley Farms Inc. and he will retain his status as a vice-president of Campbell Soup Company.

Mr. Campbell Weir has become group marketing manager of the CO-OPERATIVE WHOLESALE SOCIETY'S grocery group. Mr. Ron Bronstein has been appointed to the newly created post of group purchasing manager.

Mr. A. G. C. Howland-Jackson has become chairman and Mr. B. J. Blacker, managing director, CLARKSON (CONSTRUCTION), a company newly-formed.

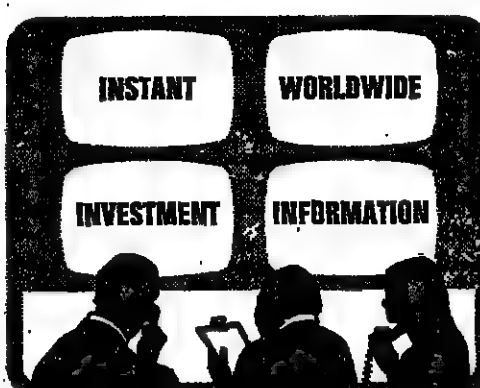
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ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

OPERA & BALLET

IRISH NATIONAL OPERA, 01-536 3161. ENGLISH NATIONAL OPERA, Wed. 7.30. The Merry Widow. Wed. 8.30. The Merry Widow. Thu. 8.30. The Merry Widow. Fri. 8.30. The Merry Widow.

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THEATRES

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THE JOBS COLUMN

Engineering nonsense

BY MICHAEL DIXON

ACCORDING to government figures, in February-May every engineer's job notified as vacant had about four-and-a-half people registered as seeking it. In June-September, each of these jobs had about six-and-a-half registered seekers.

So it seems a bit odd to be looking at a pamphlet published by the National Economic Development Office this morning which bears the bold title: Shortages of Qualified Engineers.

To make sense of this one must, of course, look forward with NEDO and Mr. Denis Healey to the time when Britain begins to boom again. To be honest, the suspension of disbelief required for such looking forward is becoming harder for me to achieve each time that I have to do it. But I'll grit my teeth and once more speculate about the better times ahead.

In that case, it is very likely indeed that this country will have a shortage of capable engineers. And in so far as insufficiencies of these important people limit economic advance, the shortage would mean that the better times would not be so good as they could be.

In the worst circumstances, I suppose, the shortage might abort Healey's Hope because, as

NEDO points out, there are similar lacks in other countries which, if they began booming before we did, could attract many of the engineers we have to foreign parts in a renewed brain drain.

But even should we not suffer a boom-aborting dearth, in the longer-term we seem headed for a shortage which will grow worse and worse as time goes on. The signs of this are in the schools, where interest among pupils in numerate subjects apparently continues to decline.

The causes of the decline are numerous and devious. One, for instance, lies in social history with the convention that girls are not expected to be good at maths. As women have steadily taken over an increasing share of school-teaching, especially at the vital primary stage, we seem to have got into a spiral in which each sub-numerate primary teacher passes on the deficiency to several pupils, some of whom become teachers and spread the problem still more.

Now, the NEDO pamphlet suggests a number of remedies for the expected (if not hoped-for) shortage, which anyone who sends for the free publication can read. But my faith in the remedies' efficacy is limited because they do not seem to go

to the root of the problem, which lies in the education system.

For example, I cannot see how the NEDO ideas could reverse the situation whereby the educators produce more and more people with rather specialist academic training as technologists, and fewer and fewer trained as technicians, when the mix needed by the working world is the other way round.

Much of industry at present seems stuck with having to try to muddle through by using the less capable technologists in technician roles. Not only do they generally dislike being used in this way, but cogent evidence has just been produced to the effect that mediocre technologists certainly cannot be relied on to be good technicians.

The evidence comes in a report by the Engineering Industry Training Board (Research Report No. 4) on a survey of scientists and engineers working in the engineering industry. The report indicates that technicians, who work as specialists in action, need different training from that required by technologists.

What is worse, it also indicates that the people turned out

by education as technologists mostly don't get the right training to work successfully as technologists in industry.

The need there is for a breadth of training not usually associated with honours-degree courses. Also, the activity most required of the working technologist is communicating clearly through speech and writing, which is something else that the usual science-side education neglects.

So we seem to have a system which doesn't make enough people numerate to provide us with sufficient engineers, while those it does make numerate aren't made sufficiently literate to be good enough engineers anyway.

Some hope of solution arose when our Minister for Higher Education began emphasising that educators must adjust themselves more to line with the working world's needs. But the worldly academic lobby seems to have got at him. The Minister still says it would be nice if the educators adjusted themselves. But what he now emphasises is that he wouldn't think of taking any action to make them do so.

As I said, suspending the old disbelief becomes more difficult every time I have to do it.

ANGOLA

Independence at gunpoint

BY BRIDGET BLOOM, AFRICA CORRESPONDENT, IN LUANDA

AS VASCO DA GAMA stands disconsolately, ten feet tall in the shade of a flame tree, behind him is the stark white fort of St. Miguel and above, over all Luanda, flies the red and green of the Portuguese flag.

Da Gama has lost his pedestal and his destiny is unknown, for the statues are coming down in Luanda, once the jewel in the Portuguese imperial crown. The flag will be down too, in five days time.

On the face of it, both the popular movement for the liberation of Angola, which controls this capital city, and the remaining Portuguese here seem determined to get out and give Angola independence without a backward look. Yet the city itself is disconsolate, subtly but markedly changed. It is not just that the statues are going, though the hugely cast heroes of the Portuguese empire have long been a prominent feature of the leafy streets and squares which climb and wind upwards, in some imitation of Lisbon, from the palm fringed curving bay.

It is much more than that. While many of the services continue to work, and life looks superficially normal, the town's former inhabitants have left it, and its new ones have not yet adjusted to their sudden inheritance.

Luanda (from the numbers seen around them seem far fewer). In the last couple of days, the streets and requisitioning the major hotels for the reception of independence guests. But, though communiques are infrequent and hardly informative, everyone knows that the FNLA is only some 14 miles from Luanda and most people have heard the rumours—they are no more than that here for all information is strictly controlled—that the southern towns of Benguela and Lobito are under serious threat if they haven't actually fallen.

The apparent aimlessness of so many of the town's new inhabitants is fed by the signs of its abandonment by the old. Only one in ten shops seems open; most restaurants and almost every one of the pavement cafes are closed, every building and wall in sight is daubed with slogans or plastered with posters, which crumble and peel to add to the drifting litter of the hot and windblown streets. Full and empty packing crates crowd the entrances to many buildings—the packing-case makers along with the printers of posters must have made a fortune in the past few months—construction has stopped on virtually all of the many building sites, while everywhere are spectacularly crushed or abandoned cars.

What traffic remains, however, is frenetic, a curious and tense contrast to the reduced tempo of life elsewhere. Do drivers in a city under virtual siege always seem to have a hint of madness? The main thing about Luanda today, however, is that everyone here, black or white, foreigner or local, is waiting—waiting for November 11, the day when Portugal pulls out and buildings were ordered for their comfort. Today, it is an African town. There may be no more than 15,000 whites left in the whole of Angola today; and most of them are supposed to be in at least in the capital against the

far from easy. It is not just that, at one stage, one by one, knocks came on our hotel rooms in the early hours of Tuesday morning by armed members of MPLA—the MPLA forces. My own call came at 5.30 with a battering on the door and a demand that I get dressed and accompany the soldiers for "questioning." Half an hour and many knocks later, my Ministry of Information credentials, hard won the day before, seemed to satisfy the soldiers and I was allowed to stay in my room.

Just as important in terms of news gathering is that there is (for obvious reasons) no contact with the rival liberation movements (apart from the FNLA pamphlets dropped over Luanda on Wednesday night) and, as understandable, now that we all have our credentials reaffirmed very little with the MPLA itself—it was announced for example on Wednesday that no one in Government would grant interviews until after independence.

Shooting

So far, Luanda has only once been without water, though the FNLA would certainly appear to be within shooting distance of the pumping station 10 miles from here, and probably also from the electricity generation station. Will Luanda be without power and light very soon? It will then not matter that there is no curfew, nor that there appears to be enough food from the areas to the south still controlled by MPLA.

There are, of course, worse possibilities. One view of FNLA strategy here is that, helped by the Zaire army and a weapon known mysteriously as Mwanza Caxito (which appears to be a long range 122mm rocket which helped win the key town of Caxito for FNLA) the FNLA will leave the water and light, and actually march into the city. Given the huge MPLA support this does not seem very likely. But there are few who are not frightened at the thought of hand to hand fighting in the streets of the capital.

Trying to find the source and particularly to examine the truth of the multitude of rumours is what journalists should be doing here just now, but the task is

Sudden miracle

In these circumstances it is obviously difficult to know what the Government and its supporters—or their opponents—really think or are really going to do in the next few days. There seems only one certainty. In the day there appeared on Tuesday three Portuguese frigates. It seems very likely—there is no agreement in Kampala to produce the submarine before Tuesday—the submarine will be loaded on Saturday with the last of Portugal's colonial army. The Portuguese High Commissioner, and his few remaining officials, will slip on board on Monday and the Portuguese flag will be lowered over Fort Sao Miguel for the last time. Then it's Angola for the Angolans—and almost certainly the bloodiest struggle for power that modern Africa has yet seen.

African town

Luanda—or at least the pretty part of it—was above all a European city. At least a third of Angola's 400,000 Portuguese one here, black or white, whites lived here and life, with its side-walk cafes, sea-side restaurants and posh new buildings, was ordered for their comfort. Today, it is an African town. There may be no more than 15,000 whites left in the whole of Angola today; and most of them are supposed to be in at least in the capital against the

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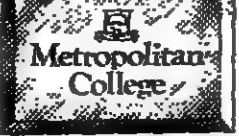
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COMPANY NOTICES

TENDERS FOR GREATER LONDON COUNCIL

1. The Greater London Council hereby give notice that tenders will be received at the Clerk's Office, Bank of England, London, E.C.2, on Monday 17th November 1975, at 12 noon for the Greater London Bill to be issued in conformity with the Greater London Council (General Powers) Act 1967, in the amount of £5,000,000.

2. The Bill will be in the sum of £5,000,000, £2,500,000, £2,500,000 and £1,000,000. They will be issued on Thursday 20th November 1975, and will be due 31 days after date of issue of each bill.

3. Each tender must be for an amount not less than £25,000 and must specify the amount of each bill to be issued.

4. Tenders must be made through a named bank, discount house or broker.

5. The bills will be issued and paid at the Bank of England.

6. Notification will be sent by post on the same day as tenders are received, to the persons whose tenders are accepted in whole or in part and payment in full of the amounts due in respect of such accepted tenders must be made to the Bank of England not later than 1.30 p.m. on Thursday 20th November 1975.

7. Tenders must be made in the printed forms which may be obtained either from the Clerk's Office, Bank of England, London, E.C.2, or from the Clerk's Office, 15, Abchurch Lane, London, E.C.4.

8. The Greater London Council reserve the right of rejecting any tenders.

M. F. STONEFROST,
Controller of Finance Services,
The County Hall,
London, SE1 7PB
10th November, 1975.

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BRIAN KOTZER GALLERY, 30, Duke St., London, E.C.2, Tel. 01-423 5721. EXHIBITION OLD MASTER PAINTINGS OF THE 18th and 19th Centuries. Until December, Mon-Fri, 10-5.30. Sat, 10-1.

MAJORIE PARR GALLERY, 280, Kings Road, Chelsea, London, S.W.3, Tel. 01-873 5192. W.A. Paintings, Until November 22nd. Open all day Saturday, Close Monday.

KAPLAN GALLERY, 5, Carr Street, W.1. An exhibition of paintings by ERNEST L. WILLIAMS 1854-1975. Mon-Fri, 10-5.30. Sat, 10-1. 01-427 0254.

DEEPAK GALLERY, ROBERT YOUNG, New Paintings and Drawings. November 4-26. 20, Carr Street, London, W.1.

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FINANCIAL TIMES REPORT

Monday November 10 1975

ITALIAN BANKING AND INSURANCE

Italy is undergoing a profound and confusing process of change which strongly conditions the overall political, economic and social environment in which the banking and insurance industries have to operate.

Living in a volatile society

THE MAJOR advance of the left-wing parties at the general elections of June 15 led to a major shift of political power in Italy at local level, which has put virtually all of the country's major cities under the control of the Communist Party and their Left-wing allies and has also extended the latter's control to five of Italy's 15 constituted regions.

The Christian Democrat Party, which has dominated Italian politics since the war, now finds at the gap which formerly separated it from the Communist Party has been reduced to ten per cent, but in spite of the efforts of new secretary Benigno Zaccagnini to unite the party, an electoral shock appears to be doing little to mitigate the internal rivalries and factional fighting which have diverted much of the party's energies from the task of running the country honestly and well.

While the Left-wing parties are busy consolidating their grass roots position in the country and coming to grips with the enormous problems of running the cities and industrialised areas, the Government nationally remains in the hands of a fragile two-party coalition of Christian Democrats and Republicans led by Prime Minister Aldo Moro and supported outside Parliament by the Socialists and Social Democrats. Signor Moro's Government survives essentially because if he fails the most likely alternative will be early general elections, and this presents an uncertainty which few politicians are prepared to face at this time.

But general elections are in any case due by early summer, 1977, and if present trends continue Italy faces the prospect of a fundamental change. The Centre-Left formula, under which Italy has been governed since 1963, has already been formally declared dead by the Socialist Party and others, but it is the only concrete alternative to it that offer of historic compromise between Communists, Socialists and Catholics as put forward by the Communist Party but so far rejected with varying degrees of firmness by the other parties.

Whatever the formula, however, the underlying trend appears still to be running strongly leftward but with a growing tendency for younger Italians, in particular, to seek new outlets other than the traditional parties for the expression of their desire to participate directly in political, social and economic affairs and ensure acceptance of a more modern

concept of civil rights.

This can be seen in the growing effectiveness of the Radical Party, which promoted both the divorce and the forthcoming abortion referenda, in the importance of trade unions and in new instruments for direct participation in school and local affairs.

But all this ferment is taking place against the background of an unprecedentedly sharp economic recession, which is partly cyclical but principally structural in nature in that Italy has ceased to be a low-wage economy but has not yet worked out how to replace the old model with an alternative which will demand both restraint on private consumption, more equitable and efficient taxation and a high rate of investment, if it is to succeed.

Over the first eight months of this year industrial produc-

This Report was written by
ANTHONY ROBINSON
Italy Correspondent

tion was down by over 12 per cent, and the latest official estimates point to an unprecedented 3.5 per cent GNP decline for the year. In spite of the Government's recent L.4,000bn. reflationary package, approved by Parliament in October, the main hopes for recovery lie in an export-led expansion which depends on the strength of the international upswing and is not likely to materialise before the latter part of 1976.

On the positive side the sharp recession has helped induction to an annual rate of around 12 per cent, and produced an

unprecedentedly sharp turnaround in the former dangerously high balance of payments deficit. The new Governor of the Bank of Italy, Signor Paolo Baffi, told a Parliamentary committee last month that Italy will probably have a payments deficit of a mere \$300m. this year, or \$1.2bn. if repayment of \$900m. of foreign debt is included. This compares with an autonomous deficit—that is, before foreign loans—of L.4,913bn. in 1974.

But this turnaround, due to a complex of factors including higher export receipts, a sharp drop in import volume, higher revenue from tourism and a

reverse of the former net capital drain, is essentially the result of a low level of economic activity which has raised unemployment above the 12m. mark, led to widespread short-time working, caused a vertical drop in new investment and produced 73 per cent. increase in financial difficulties in an economy highly dependent on expensive bank finance.

Indeed, one of the consequences of the recession has been to reveal once again the precarious financial structure of most Italian private and public companies, the State and local authorities. This is revealed by the latest Mediobanca report on the financial state of Italian companies, which shows that the proportion of their equity to other capital has fallen from 20.5 per cent. in 1968 to 13.4 per cent. last year, while their total debt position has increased from 45.7 to 54.5 per cent. of

their balance-sheet. Short and medium-term debts to the banks rose during this period from 20 to 26.6 per cent. At a time of high interest rates like 1974 this reliance on bank and other external finance resulted in a 73 per cent. increase in financial charges last year on the series of incentives for preferential investment in the bond market and the huge unwieldy expansion of the State-subsidised credit system run through the various special credit institutes and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno.

But at a time when even the Italian Communist Party has declared itself a believer in the value of private enterprise and in the necessity for profit, the real problem is how to restore dynamism to the overall economic system and above all make profits on their activities.

The Bourse authorities themselves have made considerable efforts to upgrade the Bourse technically, and a new securities and exchange commission body called Consob has been created. But the real solutions are not technical but political and imply a reversal of the series of incentives for preferential investment in the bond market and the huge unwieldy expansion of the State-subsidised credit system run through the various special credit institutes and the Cassa per il Mezzogiorno.

But at a time when even the Italian Communist Party has declared itself a believer in the value of private enterprise and in the necessity for profit, the real problem is how to restore dynamism to the overall economic system and above all make profits on their activities.

Banks under heavy fire

CRITICS OF the Italian banks, and there are many of them, as the banks are also a principal source of funds to finance the ever-rising debts of local authorities and the State-controlled industries as well.

Indeed, the tightness of the credit squeeze last year was intensified by the huge and growing demands from a public sector whose massive debts reduced the amount of credit available for the private sector.

This reflects the fact that managing the economy through monetary policy is essentially a very unsophisticated way of regulating things. It is not very good at discriminating between various kinds of borrower. It is much better at braking a boom than stimulating a recovery, and it tends to put the banks in a privileged position at the expense of the productive part of the economy. In part higher bank profits can be justified, as the Bank of Italy does in its latest annual report, by the fact that in such times the risks of lending are so much greater. But what upsets the productive part of Italy is that, whenever there is a credit squeeze, the first to be refused loan facilities or suffer the highest rates of interest are precisely those small and medium-sized industries which in Italy tend to be the most efficient, but also the most exposed to changes in the credit climate.

But it is not only companies who have felt the pinch, as the banks are also a principal source of funds to finance the ever-rising debts of local authorities and the State-controlled industries as well.

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Subsidy

This is now widely recognised, and it is significant that the Government's recent L.4,000bn. reflationary package went out of its way to increase the interest rate subsidy provisions for small and medium companies and facilities for export finance. But this has not solved the principal problem, which is how to get the Italian banks to lose their overwhelmingly conservative attitude towards lending and develop a more enterprising and creative approach to banking, with the emphasis on encouraging enterprise and risk.

But the problem is not entirely a question of mentality and habit. It also reflects the fact that the banking system has become increasingly politicised over the last 30 years, as the Christian Democrat Party, in particular, has carefully placed its nominees, or rather the nominees agreed by the various internal factions of the party, which is worse, throughout the banking and credit structure, with particular emphasis on the savings banks.

While the banks have been eroded from inside in this way, the increasingly dirigiste policies pursued by the Bank of Italy have further reduced their autonomy. The clearest example of this can be seen in the strict bond purchase targets set down by the central banks. These oblige the commercial banks to buy a certain percentage of bonds in order to retain stability in this vital channel of new finance for the State sector.

The banks claim that some 55 per cent. of their total deposits are tied up in obligatory reserves and enforced bond purchases in this way. Not only does this reduce their freedom of manoeuvre, it also entails a considerable financial burden as

these frozen assets yield considerably less than those employed in loans and free investments. This means that the interest rates charged on loans to commercial customers have to be high enough to compensate for this, which means that ultimately private borrowers subsidise the rest.

Furthermore the cost of attracting deposits and keeping them is relatively high in Italy, lent out at over 20 per cent.

with major depositors able during the height of the squeeze last year to insist on rates of 10 per cent. and above. This, too, is a point which has caused a lot of friction among smaller depositors, particularly the less sophisticated ones who, unless they actually asked for higher rates, often found themselves receiving purely nominal interest on deposits subsequently lent out at over 20 per cent.

by the banks. Once the Press started publicising this fact a large number of rate decline in interest rates but depositors woke up and started aggressively demanding better treatment.

This competitive search for new deposits which is a feature of the Italian banking scene is furthermore a major drag on banks has dropped around eight lower rates once the pressure points to 12 per cent. over the cases. This has been most last nine months, but even so

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

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High costs mean an inbuilt tendency to charge high rates of interest. The effect of this on company profits is particularly marked in Italy, where the inadequacies of the stock market and capital market generally have led to a gross under-capitalisation of companies and subsequent high dependence on short-term bank finance. Here bank finance is used not only to finance work in hand, exports and so on but also for investment purposes

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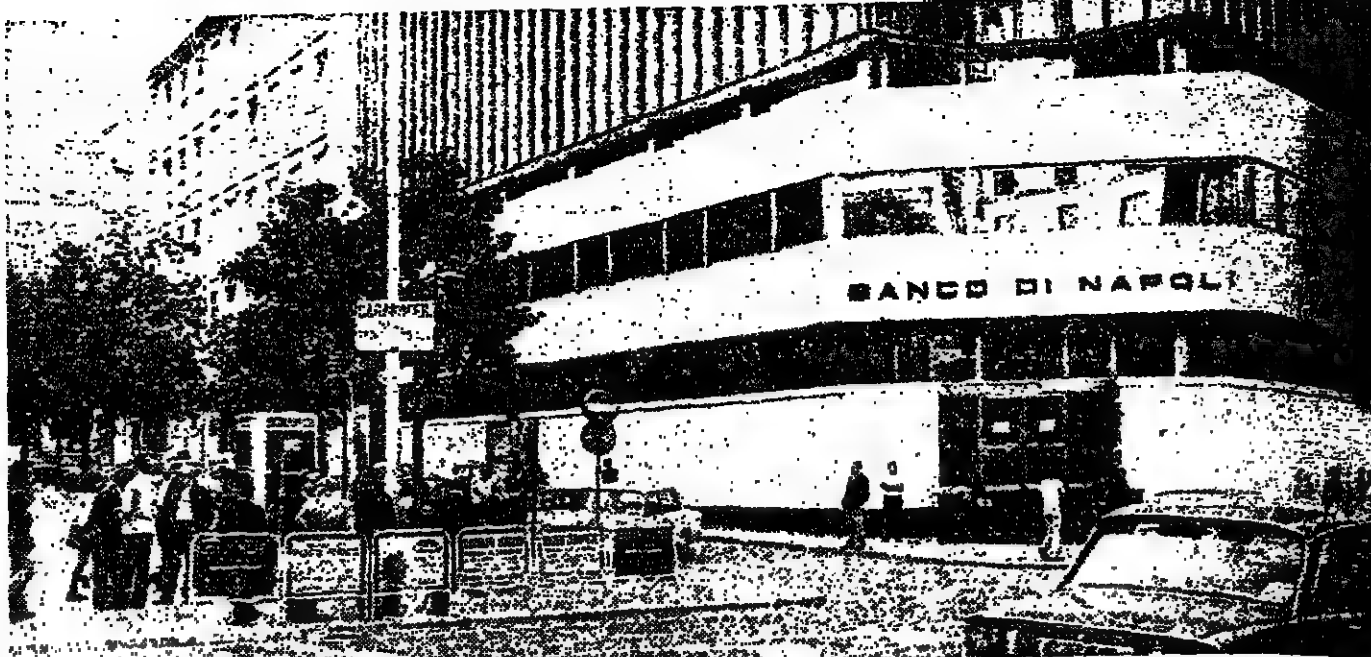
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IN SPITE of all the criticisms made against the comparatively unsophisticated nature of the Italian capital and money markets, considerable efforts have been made over the last few years to increase the range of financial instruments and provide facilities for better money management. To a considerable extent the premises for such developments have been laid by the growing number of international, mainly U.S. banks, which have entered the Italian market principally to serve the multinational companies and the modern banking mentality they have brought with them.

Virtually all the principal New York banks, with the exception of Irving Trust and Marine Midland, are present with branch or representative offices, together with other international banks like the Banco do Brasil, Bank of Tokyo, Allgemeine Bank and British banks like Barclays and Westminster. Apart from their greater sophistication, the profitability of the international banks is essentially due to the wholesale nature of their operations. They are not interested in small deposits and are generally reluctant to lend below 500m. lire. They have often been successful in attracting deposits of their own, but the foreign banks are major users of the inter-bank money market which has developed considerably over the last three or four years.

The growth of inter-bank money trading is indeed one of the most significant indicators of a more sophisticated approach to the management of cash balances which has spread to a growing number of Italian banks as well. Highly liquid conditions over the latter part of this year have led to a massive increase in inter-bank trading. The Compagnia Finanziaria Interbancaria, a major operator in this market, reports that in the four months July to end October the volume of its inter-bank trading operations amounted to around 65 per cent. of the total 1,100bn. lire trading volume it chalked up in the whole of 1974.

Interbancaria, under manag-



A branch of the Banco di Napoli in Brindisi.

ing director Guido Vitale, has played an important and highly profitable role in modernisation of the Milan financial structure. Recently, for example, it introduced a bankers acceptance system for the first time, although the growth of this activity is closely linked to a reduction of stamp duties on such transactions which is currently under study by the Finance Ministry. At present there is a flat rate of 0.6 per cent. on such transactions, but this flat rate on a three month maturity trade bill, for example, represents an annual rate of 2.4 per cent., which cancels out the interest rate advantage which the acceptance scheme allows. The hope is that the overall stamp duty rates will be lowered and the flat rate converted into a graduated three, six and over six month period.

But perhaps the most exciting new development is that of the creation of a medium term syndicated financing instrument in lire. Interbancaria again is pioneering this development in company with certain U.S. and

medium sized Italian banks. The Bank of Italy, which is anxious to see the development of a more sophisticated capital market has authorised banks to use from 8 to 10 per cent. of their deposits for medium term lending of this kind. These syndicated loans are based on the three month lire inter-bank rate plus a spread ranging from 2 to 2.5 per cent. Interest is payable every three months and borrowers are given up to 30 months grace, although capital repayment is normally annual. Early repayment before the 30 months are up carries a 0.50 per cent. penalty, but early repayment after this period has no penalty at all.

So far some 35bn. lire has been loaned for five years in this way, mostly to Italian companies but 7.5bn. lire of it to the subsidiary of a U.S. multinational. A further 100bn. lire is under negotiation at this time to three major Italian companies. Interbancaria acts as underwriter, puts together the syndicate and generally manages the deal. It calculates to be able to deliver the package to borrowers at some 1.5 per cent. below the going market rate and put it together much more rapidly than a conventional loan.

Apart from encouraging the above kind of activity the monetary authorities have also made their own direct contribution to a more articulated financial market by introducing short-term Treasury Bills and offering them for the first time through an open auction system. This has led to the creation of an active market in short term Treasury paper, with the more progressive banks running a profitable arbitrage business rather than just holding to maturity as the more conventional banks tend to do.

The monetary authorities have also tried several ways of making the traditional bond market more attractive to investors, first by encouraging ENEL to issue an inflation indexed series and then by encouraging issuers to reduce the life of their bonds from the earlier standard 15 or 20 years to around seven years. This emphasis on a shorter life reflects growing reluctance to invest in long dated bonds in an inflationary era. By reduc-

ing the duration and keeping yields high at a time of sharply declining short-term interest rates generally, the monetary authorities have managed to reactivate and make attractive this sector of the market. Inflation indexing is, however, not considered to be an experiment worth continuing as its potential disturbing effect on the rest of the market is too great.

Apart from the above developments the formerly by Bank of Italy directives

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Volatile

CONTINUED FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

a prime rate this high at a time when inflation has dropped rapidly and when economic activity is at a very low ebb is still very high compared with international levels and is obviously a major inhibiting factor in any domestic recovery in economic activity.

A principal cause of the banks' reluctance to reduce their interest rates is the fact that the inevitable reduction in rates payable on deposits would result in widespread switching into the bond market, the increasingly attractive Treasury bill market, or into postal savings. There has been some switching, but the system as a whole has been highly liquid in 1975, as can be seen from the Bank of Italy figures, which show that total bank deposits between June, 1974, and June, 1975, rose from L72,608bn. to

L86,785bn. The percentage held in current accounts, however, has dropped from 59 to 50 per cent. But the most significant statistics are those which show the stagnation of lending in spite of the rise in deposits. Bank lending rose from L47,051bn. in June, 1974, to L52,045bn. at the end of the year. But lending then stabilised, so that by June this year total lending amounted to L52,988bn., which is actually lower than the L53,770bn. in January, although above the February-March low point.

Clearly in the currently depressed conditions there is no queue of prospective borrowers, and in spite of filling the credit trough with funds again, the monetary authorities and the banks are finding that the industrial horse is once again very reluctant to drink.

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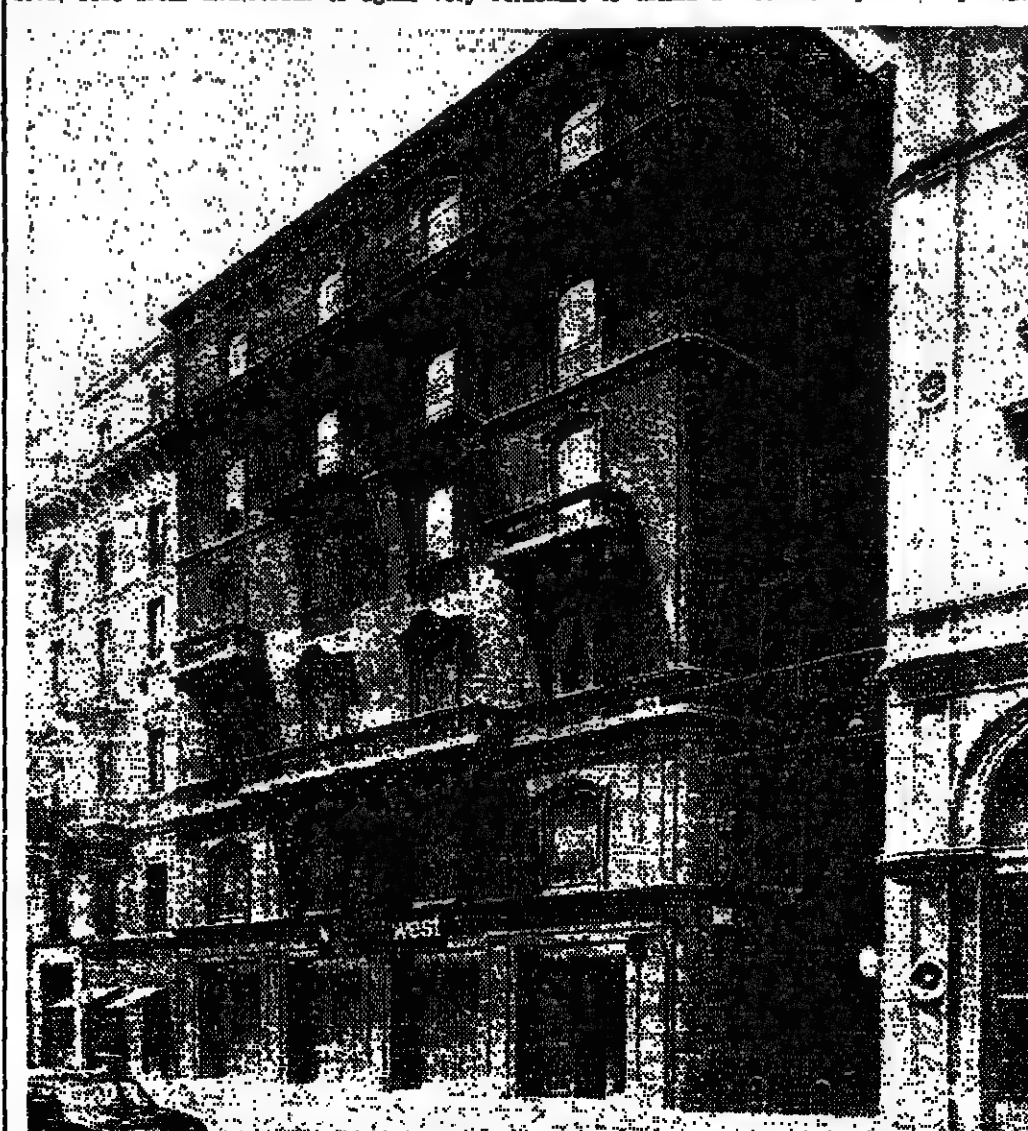
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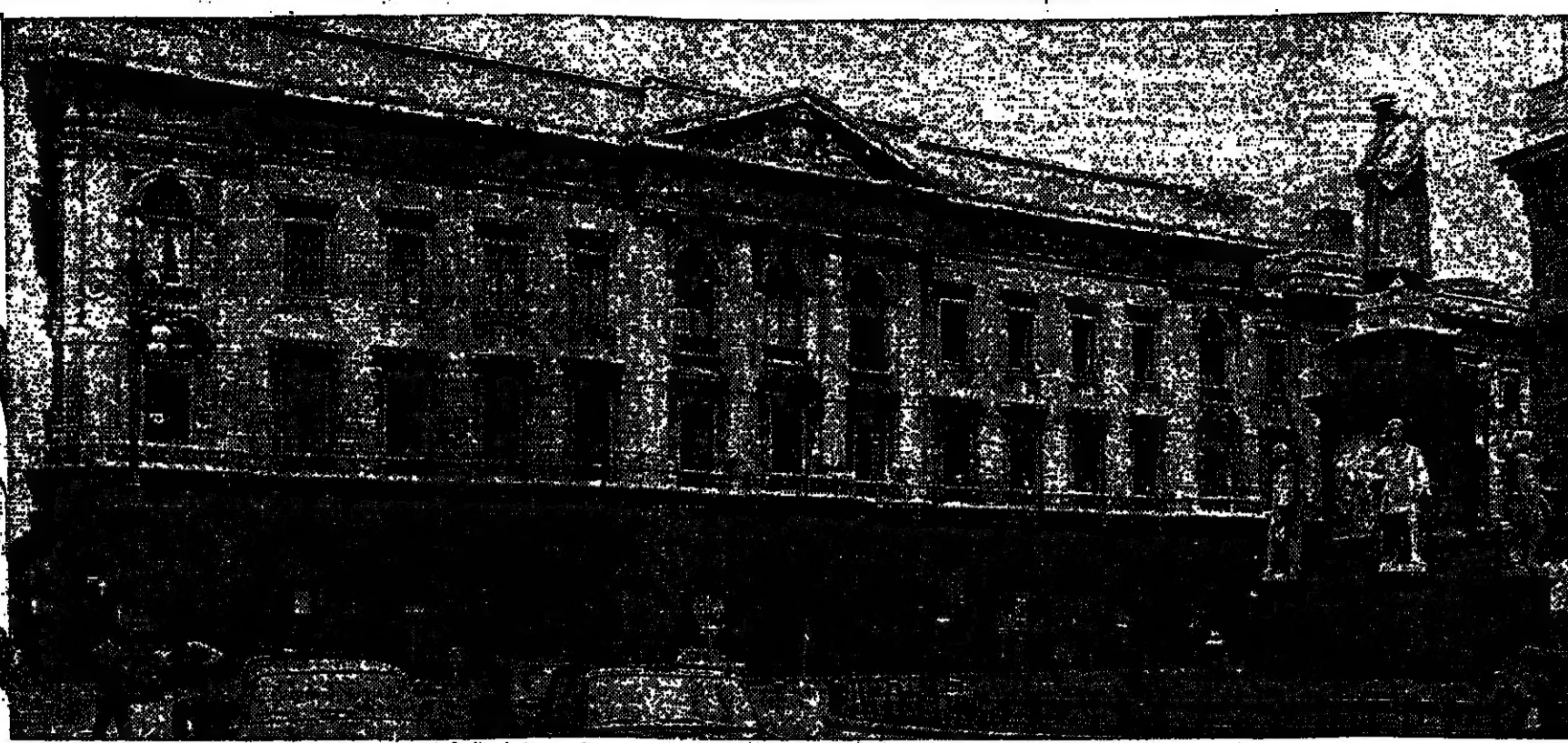
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Insurance sector does well

OVER THE YEARS Italians have demonstrated a considerable flair for insurance matters, and this has stood them in good stead as the industry picked itself up and expanded in the post-war period. In recent years the industry has continued to expand its premium income at a healthy rate, but overall profit margins have become increasingly squeezed by inflation and the increasingly complex nature of social and economic development and the risks involved in them.

At the latest count there were over 110 insurance companies operating in Italy, not counting a fringe of minor companies with premium income below 1,000m. lire annually, and the total premium income generated from the Italian market totalled a hefty 2,346bn. lire last year, an increase of 16.4 per cent over 1973.

The lion's share of the total premium income accrued to the six largest groups, which stand head and shoulders above the rest of the pack with undisputed leadership in the industry held by the two largest groups—the Assicurazioni Generali group and the Riunione Adriatica di Sicurtà (RAS) group. For historical reasons these major groups have their head offices at Trieste and Venice, reflecting their early 19th century origin when much of the northern part of Italy still formed part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

Growth

These historical circumstances also contributed to the outward-looking nature of these two massive concerns, which right from the start identified the principal areas of growth beyond the then impoverished Italy, first into Mitteleuropa and then further east into Russia and subsequently South America, Australia, North America and the rest of Europe.

Heavy involvement in Eastern Europe resulted in heavy losses after the Russian revolution and developments in this area after the Second World War, but both RAS and Generali survived these setbacks and have continued to expand their international operations to the extent that foreign premium income for both groups represents more than 50 per cent of their total income, and a proportionately greater volume of net profits.

Last year, for example, the Generali Group, that is to say the parent company and 30 directly controlled subsidiaries, reported a 16.8 per cent increase in premium income, net of reinsurance, to L1,085bn., of which foreign income accounted for 66 per cent. If one takes into account the total premium of the Generali Group, including subsidiaries in which Generali has minority interests of above 10 per cent, the total premium income last year amounted to nearly L1,500bn.

The international presence of the two major insurance groups has been steadily reinforced furthermore by a series of agreements with major foreign insurance groups. Generali, for example, strengthened its presence in North America through an agreement with Aetna Life and Casualty of Hartford back in 1966 and has since made similar agreements with the Mitsui Mutual Life of Tokyo and the British group, General Accident.

One of the principal objectives of this kind of agreement between major international insurance groups is to improve the kind of insurance cover and assistance for the multinational corporations. In the case of RAS, Italy's second largest group, the principal agreement of this kind is with the Travelers Group of the U.S. In

Handful

After these two large private groups comes the State-controlled Istituto Nazionale delle Assicurazioni (INA), followed by the Società Assicuratrice Industriale group, controlled by the IFI-Fiat group, whose Siat subsidiary is one of the most important maritime insurance companies. Beyond this big four is a handful of medium-sized groups like Toro, Reale Mutua, Tirrena, Milano, Fondiaria and Lloyd Adriatico and a whole host of smaller companies.

One of the interesting special cases in the industry is the Unipol group, which is owned by the co-operative movement, and it is within this area that most of its income and investments are concentrated. Since its formation in 1961 this Bologna-based group has strengthened its international links principally through agreements with the other co-operative insurance groups in Western Europe.

Up to now the industry has been organised principally on the agency system, but there are now growing signs of the development of insurance broking activities, particularly by U.S. and British brokers. Significantly the first foreign company to be quoted on the Milan bourse was C. T. Bowring.

Reinsurance

There is also an active reinsurance activity here, with the flagship being the Unione Italiana di Riassicurazione (Uniorias) whose 120bn. lire premium income in 1974 puts it among the world leaders in this field. Roughly half the total premium income comes from abroad.

Uniorias is a unique example of co-operation between State and private insurance, with 40 per cent of the shares held by the State group INA and the remainder by Assicurazioni Generali, RAS and the other private groups. Uniorias organises pools and special consortia for specific sectors and also disciplines the market to a considerable extent.

Up to now State participation in the insurance field has been limited principally to the INA group, but there have been frequent left-wing attempts to nationalise or increase State control over important sectors of the market. This is particularly the case in the auto insurance sector, following the introduction of compulsory motor insurance in 1971.

The whole subject of motor insurance is presently subject to investigation by a special parliamentary commission, which is also examining the insurance companies' demands for permission to charge higher premiums in a sector faced with rapid inflation of costs. The companies claim to lose heavily on their motor insurance business and are pressing for higher premiums. But it also appears to be a sector in which there has been a severe deterioration in professional standards. Some 28 companies out of the 130 active in this sector are currently under investigation by the industry association Ania for repeated complaints of non-liquidation or long delayed and insufficient liquidation of claims. Abuses in this sector of obligatory insurance represents a major threat to the long-term survival of a private insurance industry in a country undergoing a fundamental process of political and social change.

Meanwhile the rapid growth of crime, including burglaries, kidnapping and other crimes against persons or property, have turned anti-theft insurance into a major loser, in spite of rapidly rising premiums. Transport, particularly marine insurance, where the powerful shipping companies manage to keep premiums low, is another loss-maker while life insurance, accidents and illness are among the major income producers.

Up to now the insurance industry, which employs 45,000 people directly through the various companies plus another 50,000 agents and some 5,000 liquidators, claim adjusters and other technical experts, has been a major source of invisible income to the Italian economy. But it is an industry which has come under increasing scrutiny because of alleged malpractices by a fringe of newcomers to the industry in the wake of the compulsory motor insurance provisions and through a marked slowing down of liquidation payments, which reflects to some extent the industry's attempt to compensate for its failure to obtain permission for higher tariffs in view of sharply rising costs.

Invisible

These international policy writing, reinsurance and investment activities of the major groups have also aroused left-wing suspicion of capital export and raised demands for a higher rate of investment within Italy itself. This and other restrictive demands on its entrepreneurial activities pose a serious threat to an industry which has remained an essentially private enterprise sector up to now but is aware of the difficulties involved in maintaining this position in the face of growing attacks on its independence.

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Monetary values in US dollars were calculated at the exchange rate of Lit. 682.025 to the US dollar.

MINES

"Recent Issues" and "Rights" Page 25

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Lisbon rally ends in chaos as gas scatters crowd

BY PAUL ELMAN

A BIG pro-Government rally broke up in scenes of wild disorder here this evening, after gas grenades and explosive petrols were let off in the middle of the crowd.

With the armed forces already on a state of alert, the attacks brought a sharp increase in the tension surrounding the run-up to Angolan independence at midnight to-morrow.

The rally had been called by the Socialists and the Popular Democrats, the two biggest Portuguese parties, to proclaim their support for Admiral Pinheiro de Azevedo, the Prime Minister, in his drive against the crisis of authority which threatens the survival of the sixth provisional Government.

About 30,000 people gathered during the late afternoon in the Terreiro do Paço on the Lisbon waterfront, turning the square into a red and orange sea of Socialist and PPD banners.

Most were families accompanied by children in their Sunday best and despite the chanting of the slogans they seemed to be in the mood for a festive atmosphere.

The Government had during the previous week been given something to celebrate, since it survived two moves designed to assert its authority. These actions were the clearing of Leftist civil servants from the Information Ministry after they launched a campaign for the removal of Lieut-Col. Ferreira Pinto, the Secretary for Information, and the destruction of the transmitters at Radio Renascença to end its use by extreme Leftists who had refused to end their occupation of the station.

The need for discipline was immediately taken up by the Prime Minister in his speech, delivered from the balcony of a Government building, with Dr.

Mario Soares, the Socialist leader, and Dr. Carneiro, the PPD leader, at his side.

The April 25 coup last year had not been undertaken, the Prime Minister said, "in order to substitute one minority by another, one intolerance by another, intolerance, one violence by another violence."

He belaboured both the extreme Left and Right, warning that the danger of a new dictatorship was present at both ends of the spectrum.

In roars of approval, he denounced indiscipline in the armed forces, referring to the "depressing spectacle of hooded soldiers and officers in street demonstrations."

As he went on, scuffles broke out on the fringe of the crowd, and the disciplined ranks of the armed forces, referring to the "depressing spectacle of hooded soldiers and officers in street demonstrations."

Thousands fled, weeping and vomiting as the nauseating cloud

of gas filled the square. Children, crying and in panic and crying for their parents were trampled underfoot.

A group of military policemen breaking up a scuffle became the target for the crowd's rage when they donned gas masks, jumped into heaps and drove off.

Poles used to support banners were turned into cudgels as demonstrators pursued the military police, screaming "Cowards!"

The military police regrouped on the other side of the square and fired automatic weapons to drive back their pursuers. The shooting added to the pandemonium as people rushed to take cover, or threw themselves to the ground.

Observers believed to-day's disruption was the work of extreme Left groups, angered by the use of tear gas during the demonstration at the Information Ministry last week.

Iran rail deal may boost exports

BY ARTHUR SMITH

BIG EXPORT orders could result from a £7m. consultancy contract awarded to British Rail by Iran.

Transmark, the British Rail consultancy subsidiary, is to carry out preliminary studies and design work to modernise and electrify 625 miles of the Iranian network. Early estimates suggest that the cost of the project, which will take some seven years, will be about £10m.

British companies understood to be seeking a share of the work include GEC, John Laing International, and Sir Alfred McAlpine.

Mr. Richard Marsh, chairman of British Rail, described the Transmark contract, which was signed in Tehran over the week-end, as a "significant breakthrough."

It opened the door to the possibility of very big orders for railway equipment and rolling stock, and could mark the first stage of considerable world-wide exports of British Rail products.

It is a success story in which British Rail and private industry in this country have co-operated. It is now up to us in Britain to take advantage of the opportunities created.

The line to be modernised runs from Tehran to Tabriz, linking the Iranian capital with the Turkish and Soviet borders. The work will involve everything from civil engineering and track laying to the provision of stations, rolling stock and signalling equipment.

Sandilands: the way ahead

THE LEX COLUMN

The inflation accounting ball has now been firmly served into the Government's court. The various factions in industry and the accounting profession have agreed to paper over their still wide differences. In order to open the way for official acceptance of the Sandilands Report. But the impression which emerged from last week's two-day Financial Times conference on inflation accounting was that political considerations had come to elbow out the search for a truly comprehensive and comprehensible system.

It is apparent that the great inflation accounting debate has failed to produce a solution which is fully acceptable to all users of accounts. Proponents of the CPP system, as put forward in SSAP 7, made the tactical error of suggesting that the inflation-erected figures were in some sense "supplementary" and have not coped adequately with the problem arising from the fact that trends in liquidity and profitability may be quite different. On the other hand, CC accounting concentrates on liquidity to the exclusion of any consideration of changes in the purchasing power of the proprietors' funds.

The needs of shareholders have emerged as being different from those of economic policy-makers and industrial managers, and in political terms subsidiary to them. But this need not pose any major problems for the stock market. After all, the stock market has proved a better interpreter of events in the recent past than either governments or industry. If CC accounting gets the go-ahead, the analytical problems will change but will be by no means insuperable.

As a useful new analysis of the Sandilands Report, shortly to be issued by the Institute of Chartered Accountants, Mr. Walker puts it little difficulty in understanding CC principles. Moreover, the study comments that in recent years—since 1960 onwards—changes in corporate liquidity have had a greater influence on share prices than reported earnings.

In this sense CC earnings, being more directly related to liquidity, may be reflected in share price movements more closely than CPP figures. But it would be surprising if CC earnings were to maintain this relationship with share prices in the longer term.

Incidentally, the brokers point out that global figures for industrial profits on approximately the Sandilands basis have for some time been available in the National Income Accounts.

CC and prices

Essentially, Sandilands proposes a switch from one extreme to the other: from historic cost accounting, which throws up very high profit figures in times of rapid inflation, to current cost accounting, which in present conditions is likely to lead to a drop of some three-fifths on average in published pre-tax profits. The importance of the adoption of CC principles by the Price Commission was given considerable stress at the conference. But it does not require the adoption of a new universal accounting system in conditions of haste and wide disagreement simply in order to obtain relaxations of the Price Code.

In such a political debate, of course, those who do not stand up and make their presence felt tend to be ignored. This is the experience of the banks, which did not make submissions to the Sandilands Committee, and have found themselves left high and dry with their profits still ostensibly very large and their tax liabilities scarcely reduced. Perhaps the residual provisions for disclosing purchasing power changes proposed by the accountancy bodies last week will help them.

But the banks and other financial companies may now have to work out their own solutions. They will have to consider the desirability of making non-distributable appropriations from the purchasing power of the capital base. As things stand, the bank would not get any tax relief. Mr. Francis Sandilands himself, talking about financial companies last Thursday, confessed that the Committee "could not produce rules for

every type of company." His honesty was refreshing, but it clashed with the report's claim to provide "a fully comprehensive method of accounting for inflation."

Perhaps the most worrying inflation accounting problem now is that industry and the City may be facing a long and confusing interregnum. Even the Sandilands timetable would not lead to official CC accounts being produced before 1979 (in respect of calendar 1978) and no one is sure whether this can be achieved in practice. A few ardent garde companies could no doubt switch over quite quickly—Pilkington says it will go over to the Sandilands basis for the period beginning next April, at least for management accounts. But this is very untypical, and those companies which have followed SSAP 7 may be reluctant to go on backing a loser. There could easily be even fewer inflation-adjusted accounts than before.

The best way out of this transitional crisis may be to encourage companies to make crude Sandilands adjustments. Many companies already use replacement cost methods for internal purposes, and a rough cost of sales adjustment should not pose too many problems. The calculations could be made with the aid of the auditors though they would not be formally audited.

Problem areas

But many problems remain to be solved before a full CC accounting standard can be introduced. It is obscure how many companies will wish to value part or all of their assets at less than full replacement cost. Need the cost-of-sale adjustment be applied to off contracts, as is common in the case of contractors and heavy engineers, and should it relate to work-in-progress or net of progress payments? Overseas operations present another area of major difficulty. And it may be necessary to negotiate obligations such as those arising from debenture trust deeds, given that a change in the nature of profits is proposed.

Heath fails to stop report

BY STEWART FLEMING

MR. EDWARD HEATH, the former Conservative Prime Minister, made an unsuccessful attempt late on Saturday night to prevent the Sunday Times from publishing a report suggesting that he had unwittingly profited from share trading activities by Slater Walker Securities.

Mr. Heath applied for an ex parte injunction to prevent the article from being published. The application was heard by Mr. Justice McKenna, a Queens Bench judge, sitting at his home in the Temple.

The judge rejected Mr. Heath's request after representations on his behalf by Sir Peter Rawlinson, Attorney-General in the last Conservative Government.

Mr. Heath yesterday refused to comment on the Sunday Times report. He said that the article was subject to "legal process. It is obviously wrong for me to comment."

The Sunday Times report alleged that some of the Tory MP's assets had been managed between 1965 and 1970 by Slater Walker and that Mr. Heath, through a nominee account, was a shareholder in Tokentake Investments and Oriental Carpets. It suggested that as a result of these investments he made a substantial gain.

'Never aware'

The article emphasised that Mr. Heath missed out initially from Slater Walker's share trading activities and that he was never aware of the methods by which his investments were increased.

It said that Mr. Heath on becoming Prime Minister in 1970, instructed that all his shares should be sold, whether profitable or not, and the money put into trust.

The Sunday Times said: "It is necessary to bring Mr. Heath's name into this story not to impugn his integrity, but to cast light on the workings of the Slater Walker empire which, at its high point, had considerable influence on political and economic and social attitudes in Britain."

Mr. Peter Walker, the former Conservative Trade and Industry Minister, who was a founder member of Slater Walker but left the company several years ago, said yesterday: "Whether Brown Shipley had any connection with Slater Walker, I do not know. I know of no connection between Mr. Heath and Slater Walker."

Mr. Heath is a former director of Brown Shipley.

Oil industry still waits for State BNOC plans

BY RAY DAFTER

ALTHOUGH THE Bill setting up the British National Oil Corporation is due to receive Royal assent this week, there is still much uncertainty within the oil industry about the proposed structure of the State undertaking.

There are indications that Lord Kearton, chairman-designate, and Mr. Anthony Wedgwood Benn, Energy Secretary, have been re-evaluating the way in which the organisation will operate. It is possible that they may even drop the idea of appointing a top oil industry figure as chief executive.

Oil companies have known for some time that the team of head-hunters have been finding it difficult to present a candidate who meets the criteria laid down in the original corporate structure brief.

Apparently the idea now

emerging is for a comparatively small operating unit, at least in the early years, with a part-time board of established executives from various industries and the civil service. Below them would be a permanent staff of younger specialists.

It is coincidental that such a structure would broadly follow the pattern established in the former Industrial Reorganisation Corporation, of which Lord Kearton was a chairman.

In preliminary talks with oil companies, it seems Lord Kearton has been stressing that the BNOC will strive to play a partnership role with industry. Although the Petroleum and Submarine Pipelines Bill gives the Corporation wide powers to become involved in oil and downstream activities anywhere in the world, its size and influence in the early years will largely

be shaped by the number of participation agreements made with North Sea oil groups.

Negotiations are known to be taking place with a handful of companies like BP, Burmah, Tricentrol and Deminor, organisations which are organising the use of some leverage either through its direct financial stake, or because of financing arrangements already agreed. The Government has yet to start tackling other major operators like Shell and Esso, however.

The Bill not only makes provision for the BNOC but also down completely new conditions for North Sea exploration, development and licences. The oil industry—through the U.K. Offshore Operators' Association—has protested at the retroactive powers in the Bill which affect existing licences as well as new ones.

Dispute may close hospitals

BY LORELES OLSLAGER, LABOUR STAFF

MILITANT ACTION by junior doctors seeking better overtime pay is to be stepped up in the North-West to-day to a point where health authorities are not excluding the possibility that hospitals may have to be closed.

The junior doctors in the area—by far the most militant throughout the dispute—expect that seven hospitals will have to close their casualty departments and that seven others will have to stop admissions.

Under the stepped-up campaign, junior doctors at nine hospitals will work from only 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. unless they are offered overtime pay at the rate of £11.50 for every four hours. At 22 hospitals they will also

refuse to work more than 40 hours a week, but have agreed to arrange around-the-clock shifts.

Health officials in the area said yesterday that it was "on the cards" that hospitals might have to close.

Dr. Wally Sakala, leader of the North-West action committee, said that patients would be exposed to increased risks by the stepped-up action.

If someone died the blame would lie with Mrs. Barbara Castle, Secretary of State for Health and Social Security, for letting the hospital service collapse rather than give junior doctors their due.

The intensified campaign in

the North-West is getting under way as the deadline expires for junior doctors to post their ballot papers on national industrial action.

The British Medical Association, which is organising the ballot, expects the results to be known within 10 days. Members of the BMA's Junior Doctors Committee said yesterday that it was impossible to predict the outcome, but the militants expect an overwhelming vote for industrial action.

Delegates representing about 7,500 junior doctors from nine English regions called at a meeting in Leicester on Saturday for a national campaign to treat only emergency cases.

Maxwell to outline new plan

BY CHRIS SAUR, IN GLASGOW

MEMBERS OF the workers' co-operative which ran the Scottish Daily News for six months until it ceased publication on Saturday, occupied the Glasgow printing premises yesterday.

They said that they were protecting the building and plant to ensure that if these assets were sold by the company's liquidator, they would at least be retained for some form of newspaper publication in the future.

The leading potential purchaser of the plant and premises, Mr. Robert Maxwell, the newspaper's former chief executive, plans to meet the workers in Glasgow to-morrow to discuss his suggestion for launching an evening newspaper.

He said that an evening newspaper could achieve a circulation of 150,000 copies a day and that its workers would be drawn from the former employee-shareholders of the Scottish Daily News.

Without repeating the co-operative experiment, he plans to introduce an element of "worker participation" with shop-floor representatives sitting on the Board.

Mr. Maxwell, owner of the Oxford-based Pergamon Press book publishing company, staked £114,000 on the Scottish Daily News. He has believed for some time that the newspaper was a competitor to George Outram's Glasgow Evening Times.

The Evening Times has had a monopoly in Glasgow since its owner, Sir Hugh Fraser, paid Beaverbrook Newspapers £2.75m. for the title of the Evening Citizen, which was closed 19 months ago.

Mr. Maxwell as well as meeting the workers, plans to discuss his proposals with Scottish Office representatives. He also says that he wishes to start negotiations soon with printing union officials about manning and pay agreements for the evening newspaper which he hopes eventually to transform into a "24-hour" morning-and-evening publication.

He is not expected to see the company's provisional liquidator, Mr. James Whitton, to-morrow.

Continued from Page 1

Morocco march

ownership of the phosphate producing facility at Bu Craa with Spain. Spanish Sahara has the world's largest reserves of phosphate.

If such an agreement had been reached the march could have taken place but would, so far as Spain was concerned, have been merely symbolic. But it would have been a potent gesture to Algeria, which has long opposed Morocco's claim to the territory and backs the cause of self-determination for its 700,000 inhabitants, many of whom are nomads.

Spain apparently changed her mind over an agreement, partly because the Moroccan offer over the phosphates was not good enough, and partly because the same under pressure from Algeria, which is thought to have threatened to cut off gas supplies to Spain if she refused to allow self-determination for the territory. The change of mind coincided with Prince Juan Carlos' assumption of power as acting Head of State.

It is difficult to see how Morocco can now obtain the territory, given the strong Spanish commitment to self-determination. For King Hassan the failure of the march to achieve its original objective could expose him to serious political dangers at home.

Continued from Page 1

Confident Sadat

Publicly, he said that the Labour Government's close links with Israel could be a helpful factor in the Middle East negotiating process. He proposed that Britain and France should join in a reconvened Geneva conference and eventually be among guarantors of a final "global settlement."

Explaining his anxiety to convene the conference, President Sadat said: "My concern is to keep the peace process in momentum." In this context he referred to the U.S. elections, implying that because of them the Arabs could not expect too much from the U.S. peace initiative over the coming year.

Weather

U.K. TO-DAY
Mostly dry. Sunny spells. Max. 50. Min. 40. Cent. N. England, E. Midlands, Channel Isles
Sunny intervals, perhaps a few showers. Wind E, fresh. Max. 50. Min. 40. Cent. N. England, Lakes, W. Midlands, Wales, I. of Man, S.W. Scotland, N. Ireland
Dry. Some sunny spells. Wind E, moderate or fresh. Max. 50. Min. 40. Cent. N. England, Lakes, W. Midlands, Wales, I. of Man, S.W. Scotland, N. Ireland
Dry. Sunny intervals. Fog patches at first. Wind S.E., light or moderate. Max. 50. Min. 40. Cent. N. England, Lakes, W. Midlands, Wales, I. of Man, S.W. Scotland, N. Ireland
Dry. Sunny intervals. Wind S, light or moderate. Max. 50. Min. 40. Cent. N. England, Lakes, W. Midlands, Wales, I. of Man, S.W. Scotland, N. Ireland

Outlook: Cold. Some showers in N. & S. England.

Lighting-up: London 18.50, Manchester 18.32, Glasgow 18.51, Belfast 17.03.

BUSINESS CENTRES		
City	Y-day	Y-day
Amsterdam	C 6.53	Manchester F 10.30
Antwerp	C 12.30	Maastricht F 12.30
Bahrein	C 23.82	Madrid C 19.66
Barcelona	C 12.34	Milan C 10.30
Bombay	C 24.13	Monaco C 14.27
Brussels	C 8.46	Moscow C 1.41
Buenos Aires	C 18.08	Munich C 10.30
Cairo	C 4.20	Newcastle F 10.30
Cardiff	C 8.48	New York C 22.23
Colombo	C 8.48	Paris C 22.23
Copenhagen	C 8.48	Perth C 22.23
Dublin	C 8.48	Prague C 4.43
Edinburgh	C 8.48	Reykjavik F 4.43
Frankfurt	C 8.48	Rio de Janeiro C 20.45
Geneva	C 8.48	Singapore C 24.26
Helsinki	C 8.48	Stockholm C 4.28
Hong Kong	C 8.48	Strasbourg C 7.45
London	C 8.48	Sydney C 21.29
Lyons	C 8.48	Tehran C 11.32
Madrid	C 8.48	Tokyo C 14.27
Manila	C 8.48	Valencia C 14.27
Mexico	C 8.48	Zurich C 5.41

HOLIDAY RESORTS

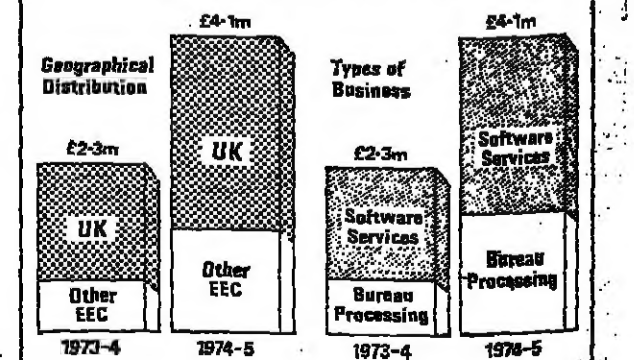
City	Y-day	Y-day
Algarve	C 17.65	Istanbul F 14.25
Alicante	C 17.65	Jersey C 9.46
Barcelona	C 17.65	Las Palmas C 9.46
Blackpool	C 17.65	Lisbon C 9.46
Bournemouth	C 17.65	Malaga C 9.46
Brighton	C 17.65	Marbella C 9.46
Bristol	C 17.65	Morocco C 9.46
Burnley	C 17.65	Nice C 9.46
Cardiff	C 17.65	Palma de Maiorca C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Paris C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Perth C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Prague C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Reykjavik C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Rio de Janeiro C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Singapore C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Stockholm C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Strasbourg C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Sydney C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Tehran C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Tokyo C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Valencia C 9.46
Canterbury	C 17.65	Zurich C 9.46

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Copies of the report and accounts available.

Equity Right upstaged by Left

BY MICHAEL THOMPSON-NOEL

THE long-running struggle over the internal affairs of Equity, the actors' trade union, surged towards stage Left yesterday at a series of three special meetings at the Coliseum, London, which ran for ten hours and played to packed galleries.

Last night, after a run of reversals for the union's moderates led by Mr. Nigel Davenport and Mr. Kenneth More, the scene seemed set for "old guard" members to stage a breakaway movement.

The moderates had attempted to have written into the union's rule book that Equity was to be "non-political and non-sectarian."

Two proposals to this effect failed to secure the necessary two-thirds majority by 161 and 355 votes respectively.

There were 2,000 actors and actresses present, only 12 per cent of the total membership, although the meetings were the best-attended for years.

Earlier, attempts by the

Equity council to break out of what it called a "vicious circle" in which decisions taken by a referendum of the full membership could easily be reversed, were similarly thwarted.

Miss Vanessa Redgrave, the leading light on Equity's Left, proclaimed the day's events a major victory for the militants.

Mr. More said of the failure to declare Equity as non-political and non-sectarian: "We have lost to-day. It is a major setback. As an actor and a human I am very disappointed. We have to concede victory to the Left. Talk of a breakaway union will obviously come up again."

studio shutdowns. At the moment we can't. We have no time because we are always having political arguments."

The Davenport-More line, which has the support of Lord Olivier, who is in the U.S., Sir John Gielgud and Sir Ralph Richardson, was opposed by the Equity council on the grounds that the designation "non-political" made no sense in relation to much of what Equity had to do in the interests of its members.

"There is no way in which this union can effectively protect its members without taking action on supporting or opposing policies which are clearly political but which, nonetheless, are crucial to the entertainment industry," said Mr. Peter Plowright, Equity general secretary.

The series of votes on Equity's projected rule changes failed to secure a two-thirds majority by margins ranging from 25 votes

to 155. The council succeeded in altering one rule: it will now be able to say how long the union's annual general meeting is to last.

The council, which is elected annually by postal vote, had sought to end the situation in which special general meetings, at which 100 is a quorum, can reject referendum decisions by the full membership.

"Actors asleep"

In turn, the council can decide that SGM decisions are not in the best interests of members—but 40 members can then demand a further SGM which in turn can demand a fresh referendum.

A big problem yesterday was the uneasy decision to start the first meeting at 10 a.m. "Many actors were still asleep."

At the final meeting, the council won a victory over a move of censure.